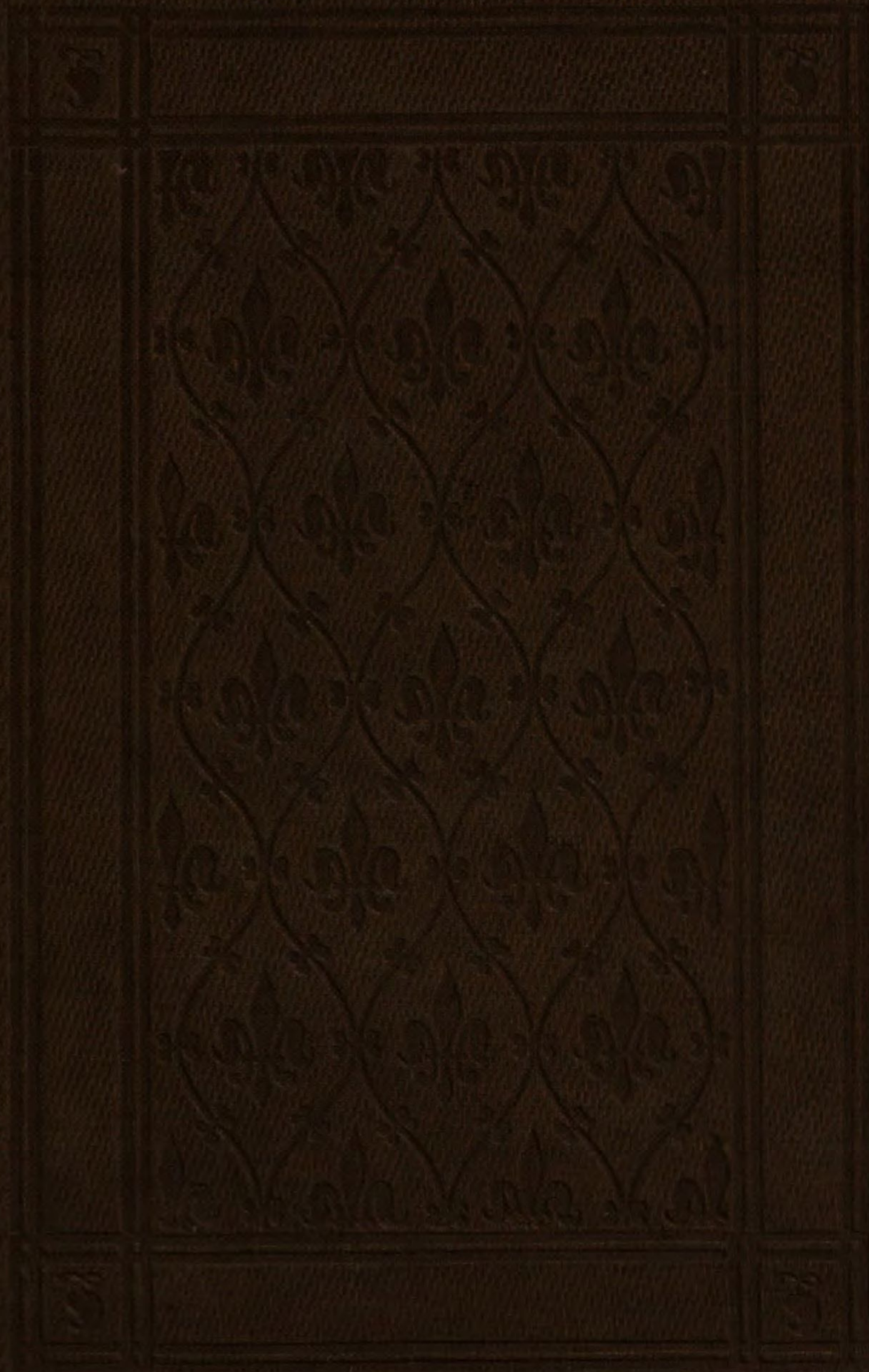
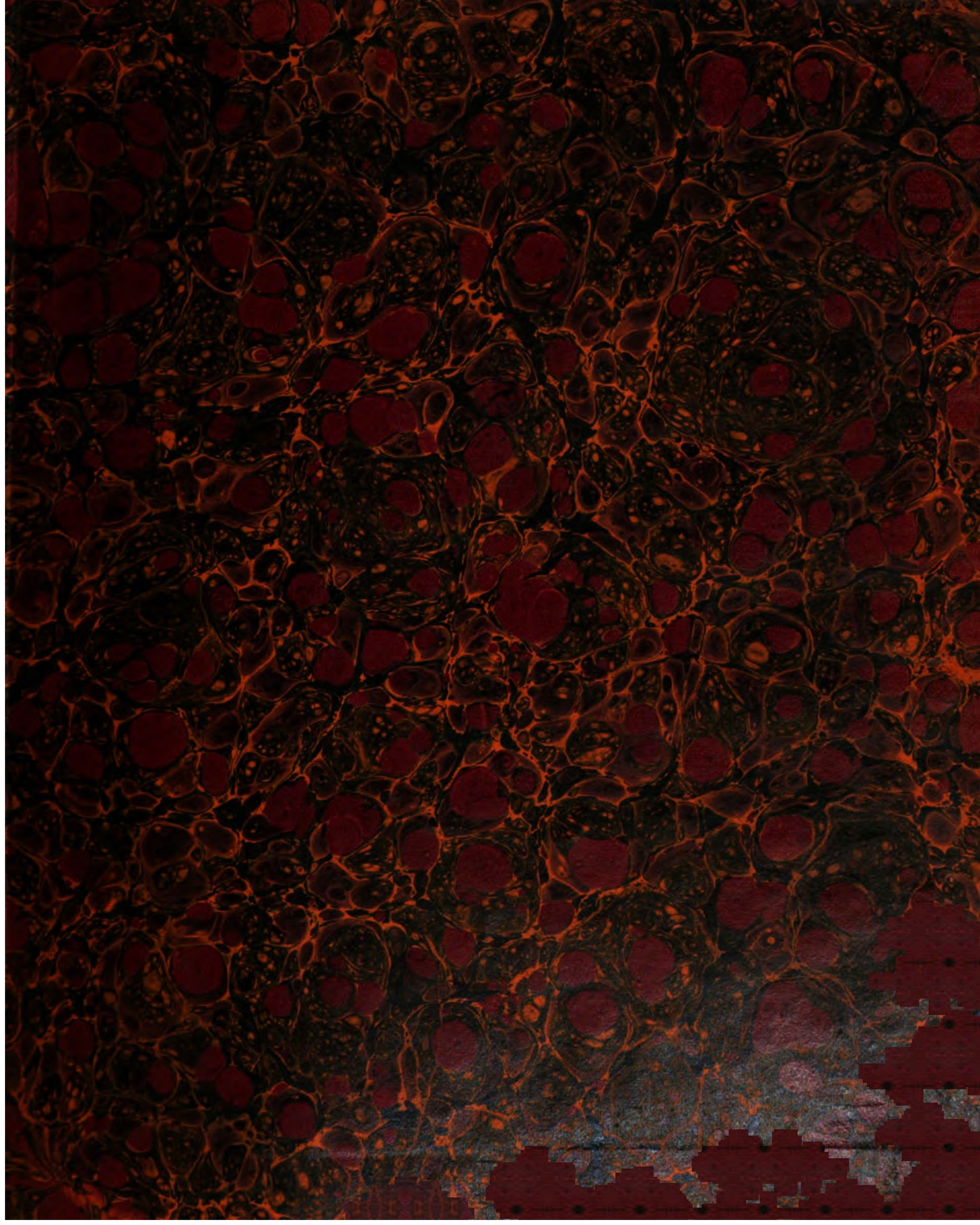


Vita Beati Francionis.







4
Ms. L. L. 259 ^u

Franco

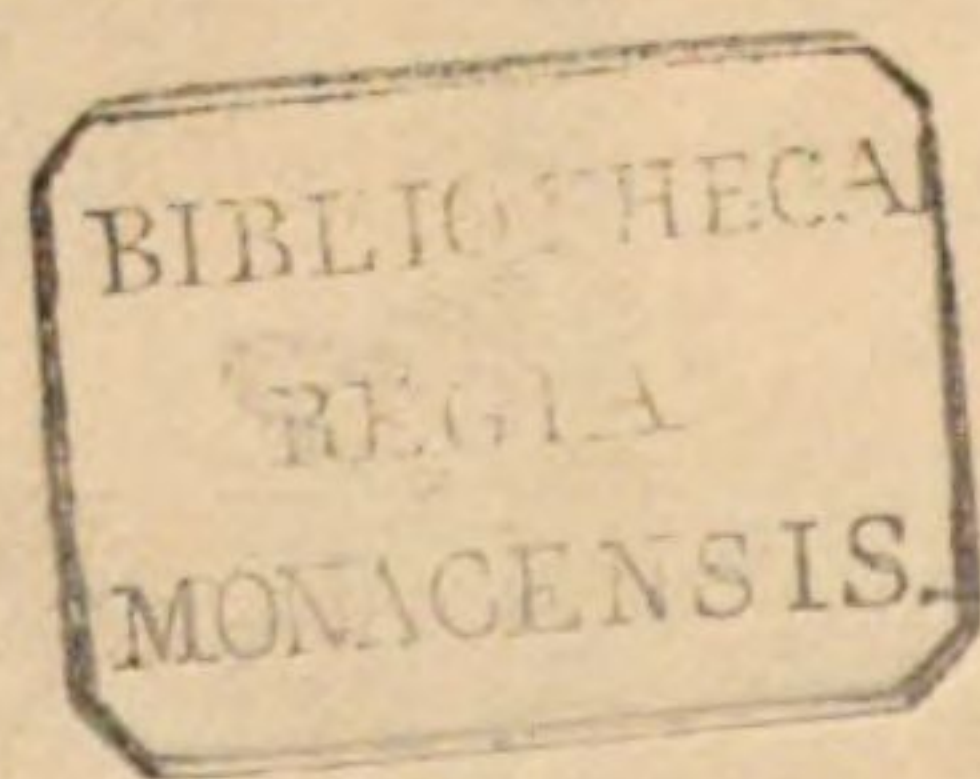
LIBRARY
OF THE
FRANCIS
AND
YVES
BROUWER
FUND



MONASTER
VILLARENSIS.
MCXLVI.

VITA
BEATI FRANCONIS
è Chronico
MONASTERII
VILLARENSIS
Brabantiae,
Pervetusto,
Excerpta et Anglicè
REDDITA.
a c c e d u n t
Præfatio et Appendices
curâ et operâ
ARTHURI ROWAN, S.T.P.
Archidiacon: Ardferren:

The
Life of
BLESSED FRANCO
extracted and
Englished from
a verie Aunciente
Chronicle
of
THE MONASTERY
of
VILLARE in BRABANT
with
Preface and Appendix
by
VEN: ARTHUR ROWAN, D.D.
Archdeacon of Ardferren.

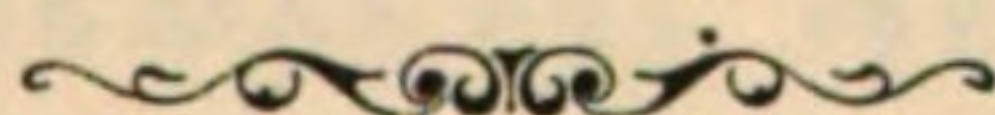


THE IDEAL.

"On the fore-front, or elsewhere within Saint Bernard's Abbies, this sentence is most commonly de-penciled, graven, or painted:—

"bonum est nos. hic esse... quia homo vivit purius...
cedit rarius... surgit velocius... incedit cautius..
quiescit securius... moritur felicius... purgatur
citius... et præmiatur copiosius."...

Weaver's Funeral. Monuments.



Franco of Villare,

a

Mediaeval Monk.

THE REAL.

"many an Ideal, monastic or other, shooting forth into practise as it can, grows to a strange enough reality, and we have to ask, with amazement, is this your Ideal?... for, alas! the Ideal has always to grow into the Real, and to seek out its bed and board there, often in a very sorry way. Ideal monasteries, once grown real, do seek bed and board in this world... do find it more and more successfully... do get at length too intent on finding it... exclusively intent on that... they are then like diseased corpulent bodies fallen idiotic, which merely eat and sleep... ready for dissolution by a 'Henry the Eighth,' or some other"—

"PAST AND PRESENT."

THE BIBLE

In the first place, we must remember that the Bible is a book of history, and not a book of philosophy or science.

It is a book of facts, and not of theories. It is a book of events, and not of principles. It is a book of men, and not of ideas.

It is a book of life, and not of death.

It is a book of love, and not of hate. It is a book of peace, and not of war.

It is a book of hope, and not of despair. It is a book of faith, and not of unbelief.

It is a book of grace, and not of merit. It is a book of mercy, and not of judgment.

THE BIBLE

It is a book of truth, and not of falsehood. It is a book of reality, and not of illusion. It is a book of power, and not of weakness.

It is a book of life, and not of death.

TO
Henry,
LORD BISHOP
OF
Limerick, Ardfer, and Aghadoe,
A "RIPE" SCHOLAR,
AN ACUTE CRITIC,
BUT
AN INDULGENT FRIEND.
THIS TRIFLE IS INSCRIBED
BY
His Obliged and Obedient
SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

February 1st, 1858.

TO
HIS

LORD BISHOP

OF LINCOLN, BRISTOL, AND GLoucester

A RISE IN SCHOLARSHIP

AN ALLEGED CRITIC

BY

JOHN R. H. H. H.

THIS TRUTH IS INHIBITED

BY

THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN

AND

THE ACTING

SECRETARY OF STATE

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INTRODUCTION.

THE quaint Rythmical Biography, which follows, is taken from a Chronicle of the Cistercian Convent of Villare in Brabant—founded about the middle of the 12th century, (MCXLVI.) by a company of Monks commissioned for that purpose by St. Bernard, from the parent Monastery of Clairvaux. According to the legend, St. Bernard, preaching in Brabant, had been earnestly solicited by the natives to found at least one Cistercian establishment among them, and having made a promise to that effect, on his return to Clairvaux he sent twelve Monks towards that region. These holy men, proceeding on their “heaven-directed” mission, were led, the first night after entering the borders of Brabant, to lodge with a wealthy and childless man, who at first treated them “neglectingly,” but when he found them, after a day of fatiguing travel, rising at midnight to keep their vigils and sing lauds, he became their convert, and gave himself and his possessions up to their “direction.” The scene of this event is called *Scimpontrahun*, near to *Nieuw Cour* (*Nove-Curiæ*).

Having made this first acquisition, the Monks advanced further, and at length rested by a fountain named “*God-diarch*,” where, obtaining eight farms (*bovaria*) of arable land, in a district rude and desolate all the way to

Nivelles, they erected a Monastery and Oratory, of which Laurentius was the first Abbot. This event is fixed in the second year of Pope Eugenius the III. (MCXLVI.) and the fourth of the rule of Godfrey, Duke of Brabant.

In process of time, finding the water of this first location either scanty or unwholesome, they were disposed to desert the station altogether, but by the exhortations and encouragement of St. Bernard, they were induced to persevere and transfer their establishment to the adjacent valley of VILLARE, where it would appear to have grown and flourished with great reputation for many centuries.

The Chronicle, from which I extract, is contained in the third volume of a curious and valuable repertory of ancient lore, published at Paris, A.D. 1717, by "EDMUND MARTENE and URSINUS DURAND, Benedictines of St. Maur." It is entitled "THESAURUS NOVUS ANECDOTORUM," and as its title-page* announces, contains in its five folio volumes, "Many Chronicles

* Thesaurus Novus

Anecdotorum:

Completens

Chronica Varia

Aliaque cum Ecclesiastica

tum Civilia omnium pene Nationum

Monumenta Historica

Prodit nunc primum studiis et opera

Dom: EDMUNDI MARTENE, et Dom: URSINI DURAND;

Presbyterum et Monachorum Benedictini:

E Congregatione S. Mauri.

Lutet Parisiis,

MDCCXVII.

and Historic Monuments, Ecclesiastical and Civil, collected from almost all Nations." The learned editors tell us that the *Villare* Chronicle, as found in their work, is derived from two separate MSS.; one obtained from the Cistercian Monastery of Bonisont, (*Bonisontis*) in the Diocese of Rheims, the other from the Monastery of Durham (?) (*Dunensis*.)

For the Chronicle itself, they attribute it, upon some minute internal evidences, too tedious to transcribe here, to at least three successive compilers, of whom they consider the first to have been a certain Abbot *Arnulphus*, who, from being Sub-Prior, was elected Abbot in the year 1240, nearly one hundred years after the first foundation of the Monastery; while, for the third, they mention an Abbot named *Franco Colubre* who died in the year 1485. By how many hands, or by what links of tradition and legend the work was carried on within these dates, no certain account is ascertainable from the record.

As to the hero of this true monastic biography, there seems to be no sufficient *data* whereby we can identify him among those monastic worthies who, deserting the ranks of earthly warfare, and exchanging the casque for the cowl, had enrolled themselves as Soldiers of the Cross at *Villare*. In this retreat, we find two of the name of *Franco*, but without any certain clue to assure us *which* of them, or whether *either* of them, be the subject of our legend. The Poem itself advances at once "*in medias res*," with the slight introduction, "*Incipit Vita Beati Franconis*;" and the following notice of two namesakes, among the convent worthies, who are distinguished "*nominatim*" in the proem of the book in which it is placed, is all we have to guide our conjectures:

“ *Milites, et quondam famosi, monasticum habitum demissa mundana militia, ibidem susceperunt hi scilicet—‘FRANCO de Exkenna Castellanus de Montigno, factus est etiam conversus in domo ista. Domnus FRANCO de Lachem, quondam miles famosus.’*”

Of these two, the epithet of “*miles famosus*” might dispose us to select the latter for our hero, inasmuch as the first of many epithets of laudation wherewith the poem describes him, is that of being a renowned soldier (“*miles inclytus*”).

Though our hero was obviously a Crusader, it is not easy to determine in which of the Crusades he gained his laurels, and sated his soul with earthly glory. The date of St. Bernard's, or the Second Crusade, was nearly identical with the foundation of the Monastery of Villaré; and Franco may have returned to end his days, and lay his bones in the institution of the same fervent apostle, whose war-cry of “*Deus id vult*” had first excited him to lay lance in rest for “the Holy Sepulchre.” And yet, we do not find the chivalry of Brabant so distinctly mentioned as engaged in the Second Crusade, as we do in some of those following; none of the royal or ducal leaders of these great enterprises are so much as named in our narrative; so that we are left altogether to conjecture on the subject; and finding a slight intimation, at stanza xxviii., of Franco and his biographer being cotemporaries, I am disposed to think that the Crusade in which the former was engaged may have been the Fifth, dating A.D. 1202,

which would make the warrior's old age synchronize with the Abbacy of Arnulphus, who is set down as the first compiler of the Chronicles of VILLARE.

That, after the fashion of its day, and according to its standard of holiness, the House of Villare enjoyed a long and high repute for sanctity, we see no reason to doubt; indeed, the primitive simplicity and purity of manners of its inmates may be judged from one of the tests of high moral conduct to which its chroniclers refer us, when they record the abstemious sobriety of the brotherhood to have been such, that the key of the wine-cellar always lay in a hole in the wall near the cellar-door, so that every one might help himself to "*vin a discretion*."*—I do not remember to have seen any similar evidence of reliance on conventual sobriety ever recorded elsewhere.

My attention was first attracted to this life of "Blessed Franco" by a few stanzas, which, after their insertion, some years since, in an English periodical (*The British Magazine*), were again transcribed into more than one modern publication, as a very pleasing portrait of "The Monk of the Olden Time." This sketch (contained from xx. to xxv.) was so attractive to me as to induce an attempt at translation, and a desire to see the whole legend from which they were taken. This desire was gratified by the

* "*Tanta erat abstinencia et sobrietas, in domo hac, quod clavis vinaria in foramine petrae, juxta eamdem cellam ponebatur. Et qui vino indegebat, pro sua necessitate ibi recipiebat.*"—*Chronicon Villarense*.

kindness of a learned friend,* who obliged me with a transcript of the original, but who, in sending it in its entirety, warned me that the article in gross would not answer to the sample which had attracted me. This I found to be the case; and I have felt obliged, in the short essay on monachism which follows, to "deliver mine own soul" by a more particular protest against the gross errors, which, in a faithful rendering of the text, I have disentombed from the dead language and monastic ceremonies in which they lay buried.

There are a few observations connected with this version of the life of Blessed Franco which I deem it but justice to myself, and some acute and friendly critics, to set down here.

The fastidious reader will, doubtless, notice much that may seem grotesque, or tending towards the ludicrous, in the terminology of many of these abnormal stanzas, which approach more to the model of the "*Versus Leoninus*" than any other I know; and yet, Leonine,† in the strict or proper sense of the term, I cannot call them, while I must throw myself on my critical reader's indulgence, when I ask him to consider the extreme

* "The Rev. JAMES HENTHORN TODD, S.F.T.C.D., President of the Royal Irish Academy;" a scholar whose archæological knowledge, and obliging readiness to impart that knowledge, encourage application to him as to "a man that knows everything."

† "*Versus Leoninus*."—Leonine verses abound in mediæval poetry, but their origin or definition is rather obscure and uncertain. The former is attributed to various persons of the name of *Leo*; by Menage ("*Ana*," tom. iii. p. 114) to a certain *Leonius* who flourished in the twelfth century; but Mr. Chenevix Trench, in his interesting prefatory treatise on "*Sacred Latin Poetry*," clearly proves that while perfect Leonine verses (to be found even in old Ennius), are extant, dating from the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, *very few* examples of them are to be found in the bulky compositions of this the supposed inventor.

To define exactly what constitutes Leonine verse, seems equally uncertain and difficult. Bailey

difficulty of framing an English version in the spirit, and on the plan, of the quaint original. To find throughout, for a poem of over three hundred "*tetrasticha carmina*,"—fitting *rhymes*, would not, perhaps, be so difficult, if there were not also a necessity for preserving some show of union between rhyme and reason. I fear the examples will be found obvious, and not few, in which my verses will be considered to "come halting in;" and that my

(Dict. Etym.) calls them "A kind of verses which rhyme in the *middle*, and at the *end*, making as it were a kind of lion's tail; (?)" while Mr. Trench, on the other hand, says, "The name Leonine is sometimes extended, *although wrongly*, to lines with *final* as well as with *sectional* or *internal* rhymes, and he quotes Du Menil as deriving the name from the dignity of this kind of metre, thus—" *Leonini dicuntur a Leone, quia sicut Leo inter alias feras majus habet dominium, ita hæc species versuum;*" and Thiericus Valliscoloris, in Vit. Urban. VIII., introduces three reasons for admitting Leonine verse, in the following exemplifying couplet:—

"His replicans clare, tres causas explico quare
More Leonino, dicere metron sino."

Upon the whole, it appears to me that while "the sectional or internal rhymes," which seem to form the essential attribute of *Leonine* verses, are wanting in this Life of Franco, yet that they seem the nearest mediæval standard to which I can reduce it, while generically it belongs to that class of Latin versification of which the elegant writer already quoted enthusiastically speaks as bursting the "prosodic fetters" of classic poetry, and in "evoking dormant powers of the classic tongue, for the service and expression of Christian feeling," giving the Latin language a—"second lease of life."

There is something bold and original in thus setting up as an emancipation and development what orthodox classicists talk of as a deteriorating corruption of the correct standard of Latin verse; it is certainly true that an ear, educated according to the correct classic rule, misses the stately march of lines drilled and dressed according to the standard manual of prosody; but it is no less true that these rhymed middle-age verses tell upon the ear with a force and conciseness—occasionally with an elegance and pathos, as surprising as pleasing; we may question whether any passage from the *true* classics can be quoted as surpassing the power or force of the "*Dies Iræ*;" and, after all, it may be questioned whether the liberty taken by mediæval rhymers is greater than that on which Horace plumed himself of adapting Eolic* measures to Italian poetry.

* "*Princeps Æolium Carmen ad Italos,
Deduxisse modos, sume superbiam,*" &c.

best success will be pronounced to consist in uniting "*metres lame*" to a "*version tame*" of the racy and quaint original.

A critical friend, whose judgment is entitled to all respect, accuses me of assuming, in the very first stanza, without warrant from my text, the *nobility* of Franco's descent—admitting, as I must, that a "Start from Brabant nobles," does not lie patent on the face of the original, I still continue to think, that whether in his military or monastic career, the signs of "*gentil bloude*" seem stamped on "Sir Franco's" bearing, in characters sufficiently legible to a discriminating eye. His admitted leadership of the banded warriors, who accompanied him;—the humility, devoid of ostentation, with which he bore his honours and laurels;—the "unfastidious" civility with which he carried himself in intercourse with his brethren of the convent, though still "with a difference" in favour of those for whom he entertained "more intimate affection;"—all these seem to me to bespeak the patrician in blood and bearing, while we may charitably hope, that in the estimate of *Him* who judges not "according to man's thoughts," but with "righteous judgment," and with whom a man is accepted according to the light "he hath, and not according to that he hath not," Old Franco may have been also of spiritual kindred and descent from Him whom a Christian Poet* has quaintly designated,

"The first true gentleman that ever lived."

Another kind critic has gently intimated that in several of the stanzas an undue accent on the penultimate syllable will sound harshly and unplea-

* Gambold.

santly in English ears. While, submitting consciously to the "soft impeachment," I can but plead in palliation, first, That in the extreme difficulty before alluded to, of providing such a succession of quatrain rhymes, I have been obliged, perforce, to use all that come to hand, good, indifferent, or even bad as they may be; and, secondly, that my English terminology but follows suit to my Latin original, in which, in many instances, the penultimate emphasis required for reading the lines sets at nought all ordinary rules of prosody and accentuation in the most defiant manner. "We are not better than our fathers;"—and in trying to give the English reader a version of this quaint, metrical legend, as literal and as much in the spirit and style of the original as I could accomplish, I do not see that I can be fairly called on to attain greater elegance or nicety of rythm, than I find in the author before me.

It only remains to observe, that, in one or two instances in which a word or syllable seems lacking to the metre of the original, I have ventured to supply them conjecturally; a few more, of the same kind, would appear to have been introduced by the Benedictine Editors of the Chronicle, to fill up blanks in the original MSS. These are all marked by [], thus; and now, to borrow and adapt a few characteristically quaint adages, from prefaces of former days, I would say, with POLYDORE VIRGIL, "*Eme, lege, proba;*" with Heminge and Condell, giving SHAKSPEARE to the public, "*read and censure,*"—*it is your privilege;*"—*do so,—but buy first!*" and, lastly, from the homely invitation to "SCALIGERIANA," "*bona merx preconē non egeat, malæ non proderit rhetor*"—and so

"Vale et fruere,
Mi Lector."



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

ON

MONACHISM.

TO deduce general inferences from particular instances, is a mental act, requiring a combination of practised judgment, nice discrimination, and a natural equity seldom accorded to man. The reasoning of that candid and observant traveller, who, having on the first night of his sojourn in Alsace encountered a tipsy landlord, and a carrotty-headed chambermaid, commenced his journal next day, with an entry that "all the men of Alsace are drunkards, and all the women red-haired," seems but a type of that careless haste with which men in general are too apt to jump to their conclusions from insufficient data, or inconclusive premises.

The suppression and spoliation of English monasteries by the Eighth Henry, has been alike the theme of unmeasured execration, and equally exaggerated approval; those who, on the one hand, form their judgments of monasticism from the selected instances of conventual iniquity and infamy, set down in Burnett's History of the Reformation, and those

who, on the other, dream mediæval dreams, or draw fancy sketches of learned seclusion, austere piety, and melting charity, as generally characterising the cœnobite life of the præ-reformation æra, are equally far from a general truth; not that either infers from a false fact, but both generalise too largely and exclusively, from the premises which suit their views or argument. All convents were not the dens of iniquity, nor were all convent denizens the models of learning or holiness, for which zealot defamers, and equally zealot defenders, have held them up.

As Burnett extracted,* so the authorities from whom he quotes inquired for—a purpose. Burnett's business was to justify that great event, of which he might, without presumption, call himself the recognized† National Historian. The national Reformation of religion bases all our civil and religious liberties on the axiom that “*The Pope hath not, nor ought to have, any*

* All Burnett's references are to what has since become a well thumbed volume of the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum (Cleopatra E. IV.) containing chiefly the Reports of Dr. THOMAS LEGH, and RICHARD LEYTON, the two chief Commissioners of Enquiry. Sanders (*De Schismate Anglicana*, p. 185) bitterly defames Legh (*Leium quendam Juris Civilis professorem*) as a foul profligate, but makes no mention of his fellow-Commissioner Leyton, who, however, would appear to have been the most stirring and efficient agent of the two. Most of the reports are from Leyton, and Lee (or Legh, as he spells himself) seldom appears at all.

Old Fuller, in his quaint way, calls them “men of as prying eyes as gripple hands,” who well understood the message they went upon, and would not come back without a satisfactory answer to him that sent them, knowing themselves very likely to be no losers thereby.”

† Burnett received the public thanks of the Parliament of England, for his History of the Reformation: how much of this marked compliment was attributable to a sense of the merit of the work, and how much to a desire to mortify his persecutor, James, Duke of York, is a curious question, not to be solved now.

temporal or spiritual jurisdiction in these Realms." Of this axiom, while the historian was the zealous maintainer, so, the monastic bodies were the most steadfast opponents; and I do this zealous Protestant no wrong when I affirm, that in justifying the suppression of those asserters of the Papal Prerogative, he selected for publication, from the documentary evidence at his command, the worst, or nearly the worst cases he could find, leaving others which would not answer his purpose behind, to furnish detractors with some ground for charging him with one-sidedness in the selection of his authorities. In this age of reaction, Romanizing and *pseudo*-High Church critics, looking with wistful eyes on the shorn glories of English monachism, and dreaming of its revival, are but too glad to produce such proofs as they can find, that Burnet might have noticed "some good things" coming out of conventualism, if he had not been systematically determined not to see them.*

In like manner, the Commissioners of Thomas Cromwell might be said to have entered so thoroughly into the spirit of their instructions, and to have hunted out abuses with such a zest and fervour,† as left them little taste, or

* Carlyle, in *his* way, tells us that "the singular two-legged animal, the ancient monk, with his rosaries and breviaries, shaven crowns, hair cilices, and vows of poverty, is a species of the human family extinct, and rendered impossible in this world for ever more, by the promulgation of the Gospel of Richard Arkwright." Monks there may be, he says, but monks they will be of this age, and not of that; they will lack all that raciness and romance of the "olden time," which, if the truth were known, constitutes half the charm mediæval usages seem to have for the "silly young ladies, and sillier young lords" who are distinguishing themselves in the present Anglican movement.

† In the Appendix I give Richard Leyton's Report of his sharp proceedings for convicting the Abbot of Langdon Abbey, "of delinquency," in which he details precautions for securing certain "*starting hoyles*" round the Abbey, with all the glee of a master of fox hounds, recounting how he had

perhaps perception for those better specimens of conventual life, which they must have met in their progress. I say *must* have met, for occasionally, among their despatches, we light upon a document here and there emanating from guileless, timid, and simple-minded recluses, contrasting very touchingly with the mass of abominations among which they lie buried—abominations under pressure of which the good and evil were all alike swept away in one common ruin.

When poor “Jane Messendyne,” Prioress of Leybourne, having “neither comfort nor refuge but in submission to the pleasure of God, and her Prince,” supplicates Lord Cromwell as the knightly representative of her house’s founder,* “to be a means that his own poore priory should be preserved and stand,” her appeal sounds to us as touching as it is simple and dignified. Veracity, innocence, and observance of conventual rule, seem stamped on her words when she says:—“Whereas we doe heare that a grete number of Abbeyes shall be punished for *mis*living, yet if it please your goodness, we trust in God ye shall heare no complayntes agaynst us, nother in our lyvyng nor in our hospitalitie keping.” We dare answer for poor Jane Messendyne, that when inquiry came, she was able to make this challenge good. So, doubtless, was

secured the earths of master Reynard, previous to a successful chase. *William Dyer*, the Abbot of Langdon, would appear to have been one of the very first who surrendered his Abbey to the King. His act of surrender is in the appendix to Burnett.

* Leybourne in Lincolnshire, a Convent of Augustine Nuns, founded by Robert Fitz-Gilbert, and valued at £57 13s. 5d. per annum. How Cromwell came to be addressed as representative of the founder, we cannot trace.

Catherine Bulkely, Abbess of that Bethel, Godstowe Nunnery, when, with her "agyd mynychys"* she "pencifye" came under the hand of "Doctour Londone," her ancient enemy; so, likewise, the Prioress of "Catesbey Nunery," specified as a religious house to be spared, "*If it should please the Kinge to have anie remorse.*"† But of these, and other similar cases, Old Fuller (no uncandid man) speaks as "black swannes" too few and far between, to avert judgment from the general pollution. Yet, is it impossible not to regret the fate of these and other like simple-minded women, of whom an impartial investigator would report in Apostolic language, "I bear them record that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge;" while their worst censure might run in the words which Johnson in his foreign tour *mouthed* at a cloistered Abbess:—"Madam, you are here, not from the love of virtue, but from the fear of vice."

In the records of conventual suppression, we meet other cases in which the fear of coming visitation mingles strangely with a "*bonhommie*," verging on simplicity. The rich Abbey of Croyland, knowing, it may be, the danger of being examined before an "undined judge," could think of no better expedient to avert the terrors of the approaching inquisition than the present of a "fenne-fishe," sent to its mover and director, Cromwell. The following

* "*Agyd mynychys*," "old Sisterhood," "*mincins*," "*moyncheons*," all derivable from the French "*moine*." Many unsuspected English words are traceable to this root. To walk "*mincingly*," i.e., daintily or demurely, as a nun, when she goes abroad. "*Mincing Lane*," near St. Paul's, in London, is derivable from the fact of nuns having once dwelt in the neighbourhood. Some go so far as to trace "*minx*" to the same root, but (?).

† *Vide Appendix.*

letter so simply shows the hook beneath the bait, that the writer must have been gifted with a large measure of guilelessness, if he expected that such a sprat as the largest fish of Lincolnne fennes could so satisfy or engage the Leviathan of Abbey Suppression, as to divert him from the wholesale swallowing of the Abbey Revenues on which he was intent:—

“THE ABBOT OF CROYLAND TO THE LORD CROMWELL.

[*Cotton MSS. Cleopatra*, E. iv. 57.]

“With due reverence I commende me to yowr honorable Lordshippe, humbly, as pertayninge that I sende your Lordshippe, by this berar, parte of owr fenne-fyshe—ryght mekely besychinge yowr Lordshippe favourably to accept the same fyshe, and to be gude and favourable Lord unto me and my poore House in suche cause as I hereafter shal have cause to sewe unto your gud Lordshippe; and I, with my brethren, shall dailye praye to our Lord God, for the long continuance of your good Lordshippe in helth.—At Croyland, the xxvith day of Merche.

“by your daily Oratoure,

“JOHN,* ABBOT.”

The “sins, negligences, and ignorances,” unwhipt of justice, which this “daily oratoure” and his “poor house” (N.B., one of the wealthiest abbeys in

* The name of this Abbot we ascertain to have been “Johan Willes.”

England) had to answer for, could scarce have been very heinous, when he could have entertained any expectation that this "parcel of fenne-fishe" would be sufficient to render the mainspring and master mover of the impending and dreaded Inquisition "good, and favourable Lord," to him and his cause.

Against these, and similar instances of blamelessness or simplicity, impugnors can too easily set multiplied examples of the three great besetting sins whereof monkery stands accused, to wit—"foul uncleanness," "gross superstition," and "crasse ignorance"—all of which, with lapse of time, and laxity of discipline, had grown to such height of daring and disorder, as could scarce escape notice in that age of expanding intellect, and enlarging application of public opinion to subjects of popular interest. The "vulgar bruit" of the "vice, idleness, and luxury" of monastics for awhile surged hither and thither, as the "ground swell" of the ocean under the pressure of the coming tempest; at length it attained to the height of a breaker of sufficient volume to land the memorable "supplication of beggars" in high places, even into the very crypt of the "kinge's own desk."* Men who set themselves to "discern the signs of the times" might well look out for "foul weather for the monkes," when they found such "perilous matter" as this floating unrebuked to so high a level as the royal ear, and might safely have predicted the terrible wreck of the monastic system which followed, while we of the present age, like all persons "wise after the event," can wonder at the blindness

* *Vid.* Appendix.

of those who could not discern the shadows of the coming event, even yet earlier and farther off.

For, to vary the illustration, and to borrow one from the gifted Laureate* of our time, it has been often remarked, that if "bluff King Hal" committed wholesale burglary and plunder on the monasteries of England, it was the Churchman Wolsey, and the Churchman Fisher, and other Churchmen before them, who shewed the way, and unbarred the postern by which the spoiler found entrance. Ten years previous to the Royal Commission, Wolsey, in his anxiety to endow his splendid colleges at Ipswich and Oxford, had, in 1524, availed himself of the "lewd lives and dissolute manners" of some religious establishments, to obtain their suppression and the transfer of their revenues to his new foundations. Several years before that (1521), Bishop Fisher, in his religious zeal to carry out the pious wishes of "The Kinges Graces mother, the Lady Margret," had obtained the suppression of the "Maison Dieu, at Ospringe, in Kent," in order to aggrandize St. John's College, in Cambridge, but finding this insufficient, he proceeded to obtain further revenues, by achieving the dissolution of "The Convent of Black or Benedictine Nuns, at Higham, near Rochester," and of "the Convent of Bromhall, in Berkshire, of the same order," for "*dissolute living, and refusal to be regulated by the*

* "When in high scorn of Peter's pence,
And number'd bead and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,
And turn'd the monks adrift."

Tennyson's Talking Oak.

Ordinaries. Looking yet further back into the preceding century, we find other similar* "cases in point," while truth and candour compel us to acknowledge that no scandals or vices proclaimed by the king's agents, commissioned, as they are supposed to have been, to "hunt out abuses," exceed those established by the process of the Bishop of Rochester's visitation against the nuns of Bromhall and Higham, as soon as it became convenient for him to take cognizance of establishments which "*had long a very ill name and reputation for lewdness in all the neighbouring places,*" his own City of Rochester inclusive.

It is very possible that there were men in the king's court and council-chamber, raven'ing for the spoliation of those who were now openly nicknamed as "drones, in the hive of English energy and enterprise," but they might long have wanted some decent pretext for attack, if the King's quarrel with the Pope about his marriage, and the precedents which churchmen had been successively accumulating for nearly a century, had not furnished a basis† for that larger and more general Commission, which, in its results, has

* In 1438, Archbishop Chichele obtained the dissolution of the Priors of New Romney in Kent, and Widen Penkerny in Northamptonshire, with their appertaining cells, in order to appropriate their revenues to his College of All Souls, in Oxford.

Ten years afterwards, William Wainflete, Bishop of Winchester, obtained the dissolution of the Hospital of St. John's at Oxford, in order to bestow its revenues on his College of St. Magdalene. Here were four church magnates, within the space of a century, recognizing and acting on the principle that "the landes and revenues of religious houses might be aliened for *cause reasonable.*"

† Upon closer examination of the springs of action in Henry's proceedings against monasteries, I think it no rash assertion to say that, in this case, as in many other, it was Rome itself which furnished its antagonist with precedents and pretexts for proceeding to extremities. *Cardinal WOLSEY*, and *Bishop FISHER*, in their headlong zeal to endow colleges respectively founded by them, procured the

heaped together such records of infamy, as must, for very shame, be corrected by removal; lewdness, superstition, ignorance form the gravamen of the charge against "the religious" of England, as also the burden of the evidence put on record against them, and I advisedly place in the Appendix the case of "the Abbots of Langdon," and of "Maiden Bradley," "the Taper of Cardigan," and the "Byl or Peticion of Dan Rychard Beerly, Monk of Pershore," as *extreme* (and yet not the *worst*) examples of extreme evils forming that "*immedicabile vulnus*" in the body politic, for which no remedy remained but excision and cautery, the sword and searing iron.

But these extreme cases would be very unfairly taken as exemplifications of the general working of the monastic system, either in England or elsewhere; there are other records preserved to us, which illustrate far more truly the average cœnobitic life of the middle ages than *excerpta*, which exalt

suppression of some small and notoriously profligate convents, and thereby broke down that gap in the fence, through which the Royal Spoliator afterwards rushed to wholesale devastation of these establishments.

But a more proximate cause for this proceeding will, I think, be found in the imposture of the Maid of Kent, Elizabeth Bocking. In going through the narrative of her absurd visions, it seems plain, that the deeper and more designing prompters who put her forward were obviously endeavouring, through her visions, to leaven the public mind with impressions which might make the Claim of Supremacy, then *the* point, and the only point, at issue between Henry and the Papacy dangerous for the king to assert. The predictions, pointing at the King's life, the number of persons from Fisher downwards (*including many monkes*), who came within the peril of misprision of treason, from giving heed to this wretched woman's visions and revelations; all these, combined, furnished Henry with a *pretext*, confirmed by the clamour against conventual irregularities, for that general Commission, so ominous to those monastic establishments, which were the strongholds of the Papal Supremacy. For an example of the grounds of this conclusion, see the record of the visitation of the Franciscans of Richmond, in Surrey, *Appendix*.

the "religious" of those days into demigods, or debase them into demons. We have "the chronicle of Jocelin de Braklonde," a "Boswellian record," whence Mr. Carlyle, in his "Past and Present," has so happily extracted, and without disfiguring, modernized the lineaments and proportions of that "man worth looking at," Abbot Sampson of St. Edmund's Bury, a conventual hero, who lived a true man's life, according to the light and faith that was in him, seven hundred years ago! And I proffer this "Life of Blessed Franco," a quaint original, which I have ventured to clothe in an English dress, as competent to give us far truer and more trustworthy evidence, far more life-like and natural pictures, of the actual inner man of monachism, than can be obtained from cases "got up to order" by Royal Commissioners of other days, or by monastic revivalists of our own; true it is, that each of the chronicles I mention has its "hero," each exalted in and above the community in special convent graces and virtues; but still, not too much so to be produced as a representative of the ordinary monk of the period, and as being each a far truer type of his "order," than the *ecstatic* demi-angels of the incredible legends of Romaniser, on the one hand, or the execrable semi-devils of the "Chroniques Scandaleuses" of Protestantism on the other.

The writers of these quaint Monkish Biographies, too, real monks of their own day, look out upon us from the obscurity of past centuries in the most natural and life-like manner; we imagine that we can, with the mind's eye, distinguish the very lineaments of these *Eidola*, as they flit by us; but to transfer them to paper we must borrow some of the clear-cut, telling phraseology of Carlyle:

“These old chroniclers,” as we can discern well, were ingenuous, credulous, cheery-hearted, simple-minded men, not without a certain acuteness—gifted, moreover, with “an eye” to heed what lay before them; their world, it is true, lay bounded within the narrow horizon of the monkish cowl—yet could these men look upon their narrow section of life in “a really human manner.” Men were they, of patient, peaceful, clear-smiling natures, not averse, too, in their subdued, yet mildly merry fashion, to a modicum of conventual jocosity—a jest or so served up in a small decorous strain of not over-boisterous humour—over which they could chuckle and chirrup in a manner really pleasant to see. Nor are there wanting in their “Bozzean Annals,” little bits of convent gossip thrown in here and there in the most natural and truthful way—preserving to us the very buzzings of their microcosm, wrapped up in such simply astute precautions of hint and innuendo, for veiling or disguising personal allusions, as cannot fail to charm the reader. Thus the convent gossip never mentions names—oh, no, never; if a jest is whispered under the cowl it is thus: “*Quidam ad alterutrum risum emittebat*”—“*dixit quidam de quodam*”—“*alius de alio*,” &c. “A certain person sneered to another person”—“this brother said of that brother;” then another “*quidam*” talked of another “*quodam*,” and so the stream of gossip flows quietly and simply on, until we fancy we can overhear the harmless prattle of these “shadowy grown men with the hearts of children,” whose whole lives had been those of children, and to them “their convents but a kind of larger cradle, wherein their whole prescribed duty had been to sleep kindly,

and love their mother well." A kind of life deemed by the "Mater Ecclesiarum" to be so wholesome and happy, that in Roman policy it has ever been reckoned an evil day for the world, as for herself, when the children of the Church began to find the cradle too narrow a sphere for their growing energies; and to this hour, in spite of the absurd spectacle of the attempt to keep a well grown and still growing world in swaddling-clothes, Rome even now thinks her maternal duties best discharged when she can retain her children within the trammels and go-carts of the nursery, *to*, yea, and *through* grey hairs, from the cradle to the grave.

I trust the genuine Monkish Biography which follows will not fall into the hands of any member of our own communion, who will not be able at once to distinguish and properly appreciate those manifest doctrinal inconsistencies and errors, which no version, executed with any pretence to fidelity of translation, could either correct or soften down. I have, therefore, given them as I find them, with as impartial adherence to the sense and spirit of the original as I could observe; and as doctrinal discussion would be out of place here, I content myself with expressing a hope that none of my readers will consider *the translator* as either holding, or in any sense approving, some grossly erroneous sentiments and opinions which his monk-author puts into the mouth of his monk-hero, because he translates them faithfully. For the devotion here and there expressed to the Virgin, it is mildly conceived, as compared with modern utterances of that system which seems fast merging its Christianity in undisguised *mariolatry*; but the *nude* self-righteousness in

which the old monk is made to express himself, as claiming his great reward from God, "not of grace, but of debt," is so prominent, that in translating such expressions, I feel bound to declare my adherence, in its full and natural meaning, to that "Article of religion," which expresses as the sense of our Church, that "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our works and deservings;" and that I receive, "*ex animo*," the explication of this "wholesome doctrine," as more largely set forth in the "Homily of Justification."

But to this protest, made on my own behalf, it is pleasing to add a suggestion of "all-hoping charity," which I gladly borrow from a charming writer, who, with his usual felicity of expression, has dressed the thought in better diction than in my poverty of language I could afford it—it is cheering in reference to the case of "old Father Franco," and of myriads of Fathers besides him—to entertain the thought, that his expressions did not mean *from* him what they convey *to* us.

"The interpretation of charity," says Mr. Chenevix Trench, in the preface to his little work on "Sacred Poetry," before referred to, "requires that the reader should remember how unfair it is to try the theological language of the middle ages by the greater strictness and accuracy of a happier theology—*thus*, for us at *this day* to talk of any 'merits' save those of Christ, after all that the Reformation has won for us, would involve a conscious and deliberate falling away from a sole and exclusive reliance upon his work; but it was quite a different thing *then*, and the word might quite be used by

one, who had implicitly an entire affiance on the *work of Christ for him*, as the ultimate ground of his hope, and who only waited to have *the* truth, which, with some confusion, he held and lived by, put before him in accurate form to embrace it henceforth and for ever, not only with heart, as he had done already, but with the understanding as well."

I know not whether the writer of this passage was acquainted with the legend before us; but I *do* know that it might well have been written as a comment upon the section of the poem commencing with the XLIVth stanza, while that stanza itself presents a complete illustration of his supposed case of one who *might* live and hold by the truth, though holding it in "some," nay, *much* "confusion."*

* In thus preferring, possibly to the great indignation of some of rigid views, explanation and excuse for the "confused ideas" of those who may nevertheless "have held the Head, which is Christ;" it is but justice to these old writers to say, that in compensation for heaped masses of "confusion," we sometimes, in their compositions, light on a truth expressed with a terse and felicitous clearness, which is admirable. I have already adverted to the "Dies Iræ"—I recur to it now—to call it a Grand Sacred Poem, not merely unexceptionable, but here and there expressing great thoughts in the best language. Where shall we get a statement of the doctrine of Salvation by "free grace," more clearly or concisely expressed than this:—

"Rex tremendæ Majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salve nos, Fons Pietatis."

Or again, in an admirable Mediæval Hymn upon the ineffable and inscrutable mystery of the Trinity, we find this stanza of clear Christian caution how to deal with the awful subject of the being and nature of God, which the platitudes of modern versification will not easily equal:—

Reviewing what I have advanced, as to the unfitness of judging the Monastic System by its extreme cases of good or evil, it occurs to me that an inference may be drawn from my statements not within my intention; it may be said to me—"You admit monastic virtues as balancing, or more than balancing, monastic vices; you affirm an average state of Monachism removed from either extreme, and you put forward "your own Franco" as a representative man of a monastic class—cheerful, simple-minded, sincerely if not intelligently pious—why not allow him, and such other "religious" as him, to "fulfil the order of their convent course" without secular interference? "If," an apologist might continue, "there were abuses—proved abuses—why

"Digne loqui de Personis
Vim transcendit rationis
Excedit ingenia.
Quid sit *gigni*—quid *Processus*—
Me nescire sum professus
Sed fide non dubiâ."

Nor are there wanting, here and there, examples, that in those days the undue exaltation of the Virgin was not an *all*-prevailing error; and the following couplet, from a hymn in her praise, proves that some at least had not then lost their comprehension of her own rejoicing acknowledgment of "GOD HER SAVIOUR" in the "Magnificat":—

"O Maria, Maris stella
Pro *conservis* interpella—
Jugi, prece, Filium."

But these and similar specimens are but lilies among thorn-brakes of confusion and error; and those who would seek and gather them should be well assured that they have first eaten of the prophetic "butter and honey," that they may "know to refuse the evil and choose the good."—Isaiah, vii. 15.

should remedy involve ruin?—*abusus non tollit usum*. And there are many evidences to which you have not at all referred, establishing as unquestionable facts, that the monks of other days were kind Landlords, hospitable Hosts, free-handed Providers in the buttery, laborious Scholars in the closet, the Clerks and Chroniclers of their day, the men who have preserved past time from being to us a vast chaotic void, and who gave learning and literature a shelter in their cells, when both would have been trampled out of being in the conflicts of feudalism." All these considerations a fautor of monachism would work up to a conclusion, that "The System should have been retained, and should now be restored among us; that it might have been pruned of its excrescences, reformed in its abuses, without being given over wholesale to the hands of the secular spoiler; that the Church should have been allowed to correct its own children, and that this great Church agency should not have been surrendered to the irreligious cruelty which scattered the libraries, secularised the revenues, and drove forth the helpless and aged inmates from the convents of the land——"

No one can pretend to state completely the arguments of an opponent; but I bring forward here, as fully as I am able, those statements which I can remember to have seen on this subject—not including, of course, those put forward by men who argue the question from the Roman point of view, from whence it mingles and merges itself in the vast issue, joined by the English crown and nation with the Papacy, in the decisive act of Reform and Separation. With these last the question is not *arguable*—least of all when it has

become so completely a "*fait accompli*." With men who regard monkery and its muniments as a divine thing, upon which to lay a hand is a "touching of the Lord's anointed," it is quite useless to discuss that national dealing with the whole system, which can as little be reversed as the Heptarchy can be restored. England *may* (for it would be rash to pretend to limit the extent to which the spirit of strong delusion may yet again spread over England) build up a new system of monkery; but England can scarcely produce again the *kind* of monkery it once endured, and in no event can undo that vast amount of influence which the original clearing away of the system has exercised on her destinies. She can again, untaught and unwarned, lay her head in the lap of the charmer to be shorn of her strength; but she can never retrace the career of energy and enterprise which she has been running before an envious or admiring world, ever since she threw off the monastic incubus in the day of the Tudors.

No doubt, when the suppression of monachism is rested for justification solely on those proved vices of cœnobites or abuses of the system, which monkish advocates can meet with counter-proofs of virtues or services to the cause of learning, civilization, or humanity; then such inferences as the foregoing are fairly drawn, and entitled to due weight, and then the question would resolve itself into a balance of testimony, to issue in a conclusion "according to weight of evidence," with the usual "benefit of a doubt" to credit of the accused; but it is some time since I have learned to rest my conclusion of the fitness and essential necessity for the secularisation of monasteries

on another ground altogether, and to deduce it from the operation of one of those universal laws, under pressure of which men have thought and acted, and will continue to think and act, although quite unwitting of the power overruling and constraining them.

A modern author,* in some passages of philosophic and yet impassioned eloquence, speaks of the Protestantism of the English Reformation as “a something which, among the masses of the nation, had sprung up spontaneously, unguided, unexpected, by the vital necessity of its own nature, into a desire for some deeper, truer, nobler, holier insight into the will of God,” than the then ruling system could afford them. He goes on in other passages, pregnant with thought, to describe the process by which, in that system, all the outward exponents and symbols of the great inward and immortal life of religion had, as it were, “*stiffened into substitutes*” for what they had represented and suggested before the connexion between “sign and thing signified” was forgotten. When things have come to this pass, “religion becomes no religion, but a falsehood, and true-hearted men turn away from it to fall back in haste on the naked elemental life, as they can attain to it; or should the hand of power or persecution be able to repress these immortal longings, then to seek an opium sleep in the torpor of unbelief.”

To the mind of a nation in this state, præ-reformation monkery must have stood out as a very ugly *caricature* of the “hidden life of religion”—more especially when, in addition to its spiritual distortion, it was making itself

* “Froude’s England, vol. ii. pp. 26, 35, &c.

felt in a heavy and increasing dead-weight pressure upon the industrial and commercial resources of the body politic.

We know that into the living frame extraneous substances will sometimes find their way, and fungous excrescences generate and form, which are endured for a longer or lesser period, during which they continue to absorb and assimilate portions of the nutriment supplied by the living functions, but contribute nothing to the growth or development of the general frame, inasmuch as the whole aliment supplied is unwholesomely confined to the abnormal cist which abstracts it. In the natural dislike to violent or painful operations, these incongruous bodies are generally borne with until inconvenience becomes intolerable, or injury to life apparent, and then comes the knife of the operator to remove the incongruity, with more or less pain and loss of blood, but with ultimate benefit and relief to the sufferer. Such excrescences and extraneous substances in the body politic do I hold monastic institutions to be; they may plead the prescription of a thousand years; their drains upon the alimentary sources may be slow and gradual; they may have entwined themselves deeply into the fibre and muscle of the social system, in which they inhere; but not less surely are they pervaded by a principle which involves a necessity for ultimate dissolution and suppression—and that necessity lies in the fact, that from every community to which they attach is absorbed a certain portion of vitality and resources for which no healthful or improving return is reciprocated; that very principle of *corporate permanence* in which they boast themselves, is that which ensures their ultimate

destruction. The quicker or slower progress of society around, the virtues or vices of successive generations of monks within, may accelerate or retard this catastrophe in measure, but its final operation cannot be hindered; the principle to which I refer is well and characteristically expressed in the word "MORT-MAIN," as signifying *that* in these communities, against which, both before and since the Reformation, public policy has been directing its enactments and applying its sumptuary provisions, with continual though scarce effectual vigilance. The "DEAD HAND," which communicates of its own torpor to all it touches, and holds all it gets with the tenacity of inaction, and the grasp of the grave, has in all ages shown itself as keen in evading, as law has shown itself careful in enacting statutes against that absorbing tendency with which it proceeds in its course of aggrandizing the revenues and lands of the Church, until the baffled and exhausted State, pressed by an evil* which

* What that evil has grown to at its fountain's head, let a rare Romish Ecclesiastic (who manfully avowed himself "*not afraid to speak out*") inform us:—

"There is scarcely a house in Rome, which has not an amount of its rent made over for pious purposes; and if a house happens to be so happy as to be absolutely exempt from such rental, from such an onerous distribution of its rent, it proclaims the fact by putting a marble tablet to signify that it is '*libera a Canonis.*'

"In *Liguori*, the present recognized Canonist of Rome, it is laid down, that 'the power of the disposer being granted, a writing, a nod, or other sign of the testator, *without any witness*, is sufficient, and although, death intervening, his will should not be perfected, it is valid for the pious uses expressed in it.'

"It oft happens that it is not the house which a dying man leaves by nod or sign, but simply the apartment in which he dies, and the consequence is, *that such house is in a perpetual state of non-improvement.* I have met with frequent instances, that the first-floor or second-floor of a house belongs

cannot be stayed by palliatives, nerves itself to the risque and endurance of an operation, relieves itself by a resort to severe and wholesale excision, and for the gangrenous sore calls in the operation of rough and ruthless "Royal Commissions," or rougher and less pitying popular revolutions, and then wholesale re-distribution of property, grown to an unwholesome accumulation in hands unable and undesirous to circulate it, is the result.

Let any one consider the case pleaded in Symon Fyshe's "Supplication of Beggars,"* and supposing his statistics not to be gainsaid in any essential point, and his statements to have that "clear ring of honesty" for which an acute historian† gives them credit, surely they furnish grounds on which a religious and thoughtful sovereign might well have taken his stand to devise some method of relief for his oppressed and suffering subjects; whether Henry would ever have grappled with the evil, if in the same hour as auspicious for England as luckless for itself, the Papacy had not crossed the course of his passion and policy, may well be doubted; but the inevitable course of events carried him forward, and by a concurrence of circumstances, which no policy could have forecast, drove England on that course, in which she has since run a race of progress, giving her a foremost place among the

to some convent in the neighbourhood, or to an hospital or some other pious purpose, and the consequence of this is, that all improvement in that house and all the arrangements are subsidiary and regulated by the consent of the trustees for the convent or the hospital, *so that nothing can be done to that house, not that the house belongs to the MORTMAIN, but the first or second floor does.*"—*Evidence of a Roman Catholic Priest before the Mortmain Committee of 1851.*

* See Appendix.

† Froude.—Southey, in his "Colloques" with Sir Thomas More, judges him more harshly.

nations of the earth. No sooner had she freed herself from the monastic fungus, which was eating deep into the pith and substance of her strength, than there commenced a development of energy and enterprise, of public and peculiar national spirit, and of a resulting moral weight and power among mankind, which has ever since been a problem to those who can only see in the secret of England's strength a God-provoking sacrilege. Not the least note-worthy passage of Le Comte D'Alembert's remarkable essay on the "Future of England," is that in which he draws a parallel between the England and Spain of the Middle Ages, and of the present *Æra*. He starts them in their race (so to speak), from the year 1510, when England was "scarcely reckoned among the important powers of Europe," and Spain stood on the verge of "all but universal Empire," and then proceeds with his parallel thus:—

"Three Centuries after—where are they?—

"In 1800, England, after her revolutions, her civil wars, her formidable struggle against the French Revolution, disputes with France the first place in the affairs of the world—she has no rival on the sea—she is the queen of commerce and of industry—she puts one foot on Gibraltar the other on Malta—she has founded one Empire in Asia, and in America another, which may one day eclipse her—she has advanced from greatness to greatness—she has produced in all the ranges of thought, geniuses which have no superiors—lastly, she is governed, as were Athens and Rome in their best days, by a race of men whose political wisdom is illustrated by incomparable eloquence.

“ In 1800, Spain—notwithstanding the virtues of her heroic population, so sober, so patient, so generous, *so pious!* so superior on those points to the English race—*Spain, preserved by her religious unity from an abundant source of discord and misfortune*—Spain is nothing! all is gone, institutions, politics, civil guarantees, riches, credit, influence, navy, army, commerce, industry, science, literature—all have simultaneously vanished. From fall to fall, from despot to despot, from favourite to favourite, she has become nothing better than the prey of a Godoy!” Thus, placing “on the one hand life, on the other death,” he goes on to ask and answer, “How this difference can be explained?”*—

The ready answer of Protestant and Philosopher, who is taught not to look to a remote or obscure reason for an effect, where an efficient cause is near and patent, the *French* Ultramontanist dismisses as mere blasphemy—“To every Catholic worthy of the name,” Le Comte Montalembert coolly says: “to assert that Protestantism makes England’s greatness, and Catholicism causes Spain’s decline, such an explanation is blasphemy!” Thus, refusing the religious explanation, he finds the secret of England’s prodigious strength in her “political liberty!” Le Comte Montalembert is the only foreigner we can recall to memory (if, indeed, he is not to be called an *alienated* Englishman), whose views of England evince even a perceptive power for seeing, much less discussing, the peculiarities of England; and, beyond foreigners in general, he is as sagacious and philosophic in discussing

* De Montalembert “Political Future of England.”—Authorized Translation.

our insular status, as other over mastering tendencies will permit him to be. But we must not task the *Ultramontane* philosopher too much, else we might put him to the question to shew *where* or *when*, through all history, especially that section of it to which his opinions apply, "political liberty" has ever been found to exist beyond an infant struggle, far less to stand, or walk abroad, unless it went hand in hand, and arm in arm with "religious freedom?" Piedmont is now making an experiment, under the observation of a curious world, whether she cannot reconcile a certain measure of political liberty, with the continuing endurance of religious absolutism; her efforts for this object have obtained for her, from sneering serfs of the Papacy, the contemptuous appellation of "The Continental England," the issue of her efforts is yet distant, and we fear doubtful, but one thing is already beyond doubt, that "heavy blows and great discouragements" are the nurture which "Catholicism" is dealing to the infant liberties of Piedmont, and that if ever Piedmont stands up in the enjoyment of healthy consolidated political freedom, it will be *in despite*, and not *in virtue* of, her Catholicism.

It may be true, let us say it *was* true, that wicked and covetous men, with visions of spoliation and aggrandizement luring them on, were the agents in the English deliverance from monachism, and it is very clear that Romanism and Romanizers have made strong appeals to natural justice, against the violence with which "heresy and spoliation" broke into sacred places, while Romance "touring" and moralizing among monastic ruins, beautiful even in decay, is disposed to sympathize with those who make their moan over dilapidated and

desecrated houses of prayer; but, as that acute and thoughtful modern historian I have so often referred to, observes, these day dreamers who thus call up a fantastic monk world (not that which *was* but *ought* to be), are little aware, as they moralise or mourn over the outwardly beautiful remains of "Fountains" or "Furness" Abbeys, that the "ruin they look upon is but the symbol and consequence of a moral ruin *not so beautiful*."

"The Abbot of Fountains," wrote the Commissioners to Cromwell, "is defamed *a toto populo*," "hath greatly dilapidated his house, wasted his woods, notoriously keeping six women.*"—The palatial residence of Sion, near Brentford, to the resumption of which for its original uses, many a wistful eye is directed, occupies the site of a "double monastery of monks and nuns, which perilous charge was committed to the direction of one Abbess," which had been once the scene of the Nun of Kent's imposture, and was ultimately found so polluted by the mingled sensuality and superstition of its spiritual directors, as to be, in language of its visitor, "a great mean whereby shrift should be put down in England."† These, and similar cases, reported in that carefully‡ destroyed "Black Booke of the Monasteries," constitute a bill of

* It is with some measure of the reluctance felt and avowed by Mr. Froude (H. of Eng. v. ii, p. 408), that I here advert to those darker scandals and shames which dishonoured Religious Houses in their downfall, but in a day when a maudlin sentimentality is at work to set the world a longing for the restoration of such establishments, it is absolutely necessary, occasionally, and as far as decency will allow, to lift the "silver veil" woven by fancy, from the hideous features of the "Monkish Mokanna."

† See Appendix.

‡ Queen Mary, on her accession, ordered Bonner to destroy this damning record of monastic delinquency, which had been presented to Parliament as a basis for legislation, and it is believed that her command was so strictly obeyed, that not a copy was left. The materials, however, from which it had been framed, have escaped.

indictment against the system, which seemed, even on moral grounds, to shew that the "set time was come" for putting in force the law of readjustment and redistribution of monastic property.

But putting aside the case of England, and the hard terms of "heresy, sacrilege, and violence," applied to her settlement of her monastic difficulty, it is but right to observe that the same law seems to extend its action to places where no such charges apply ; in all-Catholic Spain, felicitated by Montalembert as having "*in her religious unity a preservative against misfortune,*" the monastic system lies scattered and despoiled, with circumstances of even more severity towards individuals, than the fair dealing of England permitted towards religionists and a system she was repudiating—heretic England pensioned her ejected monks, Catholic Spain dismisses them to beg. In St. Peter's own patrimony the law has been doing its work. It was with surprise I heard in Italy, in 1851, that within the few first years of his Popedom, Pio Nono had already quietly, but thoroughly, absorbed and suppressed no less than *seventy* convents of different orders. In other regions, too, the action of this law has been felt; and Protestant England, when taunted with her abolition of monasteries, and secularisation of conventual property, may point to the dominions of the "Most Catholic Majesty of Spain," of the "Most Christian Majesty of France,"—nay, to the patrimony of St. Peter—very "manour and hunting-ground" of the Papacy itself;* and, in the words and spirit of another chosen agent for the execution of a work of judgment, say, "Ye be

* See Appendix.

righteous; behold I rose up against the Papacy, and destroyed its strongholds from among my people." But, *who destroyed all these?* (2 Kings, x. 9.)

Doctor James Doyle (J. K. L.), unquestionably one of the ablest and most clear-headed of the Irish Roman hierarchy of our century, being examined in, I think, a preliminary Poor-law Inquiry, let fall a remarkable admission, which I well remember without being able to recall the exact reference. In speaking of the well-known tripartite allocation of religious revenues, viz., one-third to support the clergy, one-third to feed the poor, and one-third to maintain and beautify church fabrics, Doctor Doyle acknowledged that in this *last third* there was such a tendency to accumulate wealth and resources in an undue proportion to other bodies in the state, as to involve a necessity for a periodical re-distribution and allocation of these revenues to other uses. This concession from a sagacious and far-seeing Romish ecclesiastic must be deemed remarkable, and seems to involve a condemnation of the principle of accumulation of revenues in religious houses altogether; for, while the Roman Church fiercely denounces any alienation of Church revenue as spoliation and sacrilege, it seems chimerical to expect that the periodical adjustment and re-distribution alluded to will ever be accomplished "*permissu superiorum.*" In Piedmont at this present moment (1855-7), when the state authorities are proceeding with all the gravity and formality of deliberate and cautious enactment to restore the balance between monastic institutions and revenues, and the wants of the body politic, although no doctrinal revolt against Rome has inaugurated or

accompanied this movement, yet is the whole of this wise and well-considered proceeding carried on under bann and protest of the Papacy, in the face of the factious opposition of the Papal hierarchy, and subject to a grave doubt whether these reforms can be effected by any action less violent than that by which England once rid itself of its gangrenous excrescence. Here, then, the question arrives at a point of extreme nicety and difficulty. If it shall be found that a system has an essential tendency to generate an evil, only to be redressed by means which convulse the body politic to its centre—which violate those primary laws of public and private justice forming the basis of all property, never to be infringed save when the “suprema lex” of public safety demands it—surely, then, it may well be questioned whether a species of property, requiring to be so dealt with at longer or shorter intervals, can be based upon any principle sound, defensible, and immutable?

But it may be, and is urged finally—Why should re-distribution involve secularisation and spoliation? why not leave to the Church to deal with its own revenues and redress its own irregularities? Rome has, in its “*Cy-pres* doctrine” (as it is technically called), a provision expressly adapted for this purpose, whereby the Church, still having regard to the intentions of the original donors, is enabled and empowered to change the application of funds allocated to pious uses. Why, then, it is asked, should not monastic surplusage be dealt with and redistributed under the operation of this principle?

Were I to answer this question explicitly, I should be led into a length of statement and illustration inconsistent with the character of this Essay.

I shall, therefore, content myself with two observations, sufficient and appropriate for my present purpose.

First, That for the evil complained of, being the *separation* of a proportion of the national wealth and resources from that healthful circulation and action essential to the commonweal, the “Cy-pres principle,” which still recognizes and maintains that unhealthy separation, would afford no remedy.

An outspoken and yet astute definition of the relative positions of the Church and State, lately propounded by a recognized Roman authority,* clearly declares that Church to be “an organization complete in itself,” having “rights and jurisdiction” underived from, and independent of, “the civil power,” and, “*as to endowment, through the charity of the faithful*” “*not badly provided for, even in times of persecution.*”—The tone of subdued *triumph* in this expression is rather incautious, for if, as is here acknowledged, the Church had obtained a “provision” confessedly “*not bad*” in the worst of times; when this provision, in course of ages, came to be swelled by, not merely the gifts of piety, but by the “peace-offerings of guilt”—by the bequest wrung in the hour of terror or remorse from fears of the weak, or compunctions of the wicked—when all society had become pervaded, through every fibre, by an *organized* Clericy, superior in intelligence as in “clerkly skill,” holding all consciences in their controul, and having ever in view,† as a paramount object, the aggrandizement of their

* Wiseman's Advent Lectures on Concordats.

† See Appendix.

order,* then by a kind of inevitable necessity that endowment, already “not

* A præ-Reformation pasquil, entitled “*Querela de fide*,” being ostensibly the lament of some pious *secular* priest over the universal declension of faith, in all classes of society, has a section bearing so pointedly upon the artifices by which the monastic communities “had their wealth,” that I introduce it here, with a translation, both as illustrative of our subject, and as another specimen of the effective use to which the rhymed verses of the middle ages had been brought. There is internal evidence of the genuineness of this piece, in the thorough earnestness with which it exhibits the lasting feud between the *secular* and *regular* clergy :—

“DE MONACHIS MENDICANTIBUS.

OF THE BEGGING FRIARS.

“Item fratres mendicantes
Omnes ferè sunt truffantes*
Parent nam quod sint devoti
Cum sint tamen nequam toti
Quidquid predicant sermone
Raro complent actione
Metunt ubi nusquam serunt
Semper plus quam sua quærunt
Oves alienos tondunt
Et parochias confundunt
Dantibus applaudent care
Sed qui nihil possunt dare
Vel replere eis manum
Illos mittunt ad Plebanum†
Pulchre pro orare sciunt
Hos qui credunt capti fiunt.
Per verborum apparatus
Aures penetrant magnatum
Valde diligenter notant
Ubi divites ægrotant

Likewise are the begging brothers
Just as tricky as the others ;
Seemingly devout and civil,
But at heart entirely evil.
What they teach in their discourses,
Seldom that their life enforces ;
Reaping where they have not sown,
Seeking still things not their own ;
Still the flocks of others shearing,
With parochials interfering,
Flattering those who fill their greed,
But the poor man in his need
Who can't pay, as they claim, due rate,
Him they send to tease the curate.
Skilfully they suit their prayers—
To the tastes of those are *theirs*.
And in well-set studied speech,
Magnates' ears contrive to reach.
Theirs is scent as vulture's quick
To pounce upon a rich man sick ;

* “Truffare” (*illudere fallere*.)—*Du Cange's Mæd. Latin Glossar*.

† “Plebanum” (*Piovano*, i. e., Parish or Secular Priest).—*Idem*. This description of the fashion in which interloping teachers skim the cream of a parish, and leave the drudge-work to the working clergy, is most pointed and graphic.

bad," must have become what, in common phrase, is termed "rather *too much* of a good thing"—an undue proportion which could not be abstracted from the general stock of the community without causing suffering and murmuring.

"Set apart," and be it observed, "*set apart for ever!*" for such was the fatuitous dogmatism with which the professing servants of Him, whose kingdom is "not of this world," taught their benefactors to phrase their dotations of the "good things of this world;" "*for ever*" is a rash word to apply to the most provident human endowment; more especially when that endowment is liable ultimately to outlive its use, or counteract it: and truly, when use or abuse has brought things to this pass, that "*an Abbot and thirty-two vowed Cenobites, at Tewksbury, required one hundred and forty-four servants in livery to discharge the service of the Abbey!*" the organised Church might

Ibi currunt nec cessabunt
 Donec ipsos tumultuant
 Sed ad causas miserorum
 Nullus ire vult eorum
 Puto vere quod prodesset
 Si in mundo nullus esset
 Monachus vel Monialis
 Sive secta Begynalis.
 Postquam enim sic creverunt
 Lex et fides perierunt
 Et totius mundi status
 Est in malum commutatus
 Utrum culpa sit eorum
 Noscit conditor cunctorum."

Round his couch they flock, nor cease
 'Till they're enrich'd, and he at peace!
 But never dying beggar's bed
 Is troubled with their sandal'd tread.
 In truth, me-thinketh things would go
 No worse, if in our world below
 Neither monk nor nun were seen,
 No, nor yet the sly *Beguine!*
 For just as monkery increaseth,
 Truth and faith in measure ceaseth;
 And as doom'd to blight and curse,
 The world still waxeth worse and worse.
 If from hence this evil grows,
 The world's Creator only knows.

chuckle, and say, "*not so bad*," but the *disorganised* world without might return a murmur of "*this is too bad*," and take its measures accordingly! as it *did*.—

A second answer to the proposition that the abatement of Church abuses should be left to Church remedies, lies in the consideration that we could scarce expect the Church of Rome to apply a remedy, where the Church at Rome does not recognize an evil. Paramount ecclesiastical rule, extension of religious communities, until their tangent "jurisdictions" should circle the world, forms, in Roman estimation, the *beau ideal* of government; so that to defer reform until Rome, "*of its own mere motion*," saw need for any re-distribution of Church resources, would be most a rustic-like waiting for a river to run itself dry. Monachism stands too prominent among the bulwarks of Papal influence to allow the Pope to confess an evil in what he cherishes as a stronghold of his position, and it is to be feared that a system containing a self-acting provision for the redress of its own evils, or disorders, is a desideratum not to be found on this earth, of human construction, or for human administration. Paley, in his irrefutable argument against Atheism, has adduced the "self-repairing" power of the living structure, its "well wearing" durability while in constant work, as contrasted with the imperfection of human machinery in these respects, among the proofs that "the hand which made it is divine," and in the system of the universe, the investigations of modern science* have discovered to us, a provision, as beautiful as

* Astronomic observation had ascertained, that in the motion of the planets in their *nearly* circular orbits, certain irregularities and deviations exist, which, going on uncorrected, must, in periods indefinitely

wondrous, whereby the "stars, in their courses," traverse their appointed orbits, with minute deviations (and these possibly the results of higher, and more general, though yet unascertained laws), which, when they approach an appreciable amount of derangement, with self-adjusting accuracy, *correct themselves*, and leave the Solar System to proceed (as far as its physical laws are concerned), through ages to come, with the regularity of the ages that are past.

But this beautiful instance of "manifold wisdom," thus set in the open firmament of heaven to "declare the glory of God," belongs not to things or institutions "of the earth—earthly," least of all to a system which, generated in the nonage of Christianized humanity, nurtured and disciplined by superstition and "will-worship," still survives into our era, to give point and force to that sure word, which warns us that the "day of Christ," and

remote, involve the derangement and destruction of the present system of the universe. It is true that these periods, remote beyond calculation or thought, could be of little practical or personal concern to us, atoms of a day, and whose microcosm is but a point in the infinity around us; but to the *exact* philosopher, a problem unsolved, or undealt with, is an offence and irritation, and astronomy has found too many seeming anomalies proving ultimately to be results of more general laws to allow any such matter as this to go uninvestigated; accordingly, the powers of high science have been applied to this phenomenon, until they have resulted in the astonishing discovery that these seeming deviations and irregularities are found periodically to correct themselves—that they reach a maximum point at which they readjust that balance of action and attraction which they threatened to destroy, so that average regularity is preserved. The periods of deviation and return are ascertained to be enormous; but, the able author from whom I quote, after reciting the conclusions of *Lagrange* and *Laplace*, concludes thus: "The restoration is as complete as the derangement, and, in the mean time, the disturbance never obtains sufficient amount seriously to alter the adaptation of the system."—*Whewell, Bridgewater Treatise*.

the "brightness of his coming," will shine out upon a world, lying as to a large section of it, captured and contented, in the meshes of a—"strong delusion."

* * * * *

Most of the foregoing remarks had been thought out and committed to paper before my attention was directed to "Froude's History of England;" but I should be ungrateful and unjust if I omitted to acknowledge the advantage and confirmation of my own crude views, with which I have read the *livraison* of a work which, it is to be hoped, its candid and competent Author will carry on to a speedy and successful completion. The proverbial difficulty of treating trite or trivial subjects with propriety, Mr. Froude has fully mastered, as also that of selecting his subject with judgment. The period "from the death of Wolsey to the death of Elizabeth," marks the *first era* of National History which furnishes reliable historic data, or links on connectedly with the time in which we live;—our minds make an instinctive break in National Annals at the commencement of this period,—all before seems to lie in a dim far-off age of myth and feudalism—the Wars of the Roses have scarce more distinctness for us than those of the Crusaders, and the ante-Tudor age seems to bear much the same relation to our own—as the dispensation of type and shadow did to the "day of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ;" we do not deny a deep and intimate relation between them, but our interests and our intelligence are attracted to the latter period in a way and measure in which they never are to the former. Mr. Froude has therefore been judicious and

happy in starting from a point at which he takes with him the fresh and not already fagged interest of his readers.

But the most original and ingenious feature in Mr. Froude's treatment of his subject, lies in the historic account to which he has turned, the Statute Book! as illustrating the spirit and mind of the Nation, speaking in successive Acts of Parliament. Although the idea of resorting to the Statute Book for such a purpose, is as new as it is valuable, yet, in the hands of a "Dry-as-dust" compiler it would have resulted in nothing better than a mere index of obsolete enactments; but carried out as it has been by Mr. Froude, we find these buried and bye-gone laws of the Realm assuming a life and importance never supposed to be in them. Under his arranging hand, they take the shape of a *medallique* or *numismatic* History of the Era, or, as he happily expresses it, "by arranging the documentary evidence on each transaction, in close and careful chronological order, it has seemed *as if the History had written itself*, in its main outlines," leaving to him but to fill in the colouring and drapery, a part of his task executed with the discrimination and candour of a mind at once thoughtful, philosophic, and refined.

I am sure I express, in my own, the anxiety of every reader, that the work may be completed with all the despatch consistent with having the end congruous to the beginning.

A. B. R.

BELMONT,

December 22, 1857.

Now—A third has noticed me that the doubt expressed as to the
whether Xenocrates meant Pythagoras, was well founded. Xenocrates appears to
have been a genuine name of Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras and "The
Pythagoras," and I repeat the following as more probably, the description
from which the "Hellenic Hellenism" was obtained:—

"The Pythagoras of Pythagoras (Pythagoras) is a Hellenic Hellenism in
Pythagoras—Pythagoras is the Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras."

Pythagoras, Pythagoras

"A.D. 1678. Hellenism in Pythagoras is Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras.
Hellenism in Pythagoras is Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras."
Hellenism in Pythagoras is Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras.
Hellenism in Pythagoras is Hellenic Hellenism in Pythagoras."

NOTE.—A friend has satisfied me that the doubt expressed at p. vii., whether *Dunensis* meant Durham, was well founded. *Dunum* appears to have been a common name of Monastic Establishments in France and “The Pays Bays;” and I select the following as, most probably, the depository from which the “MS. Chronicon Villarensense” was obtained:—

“Notre Dame de Dunes (Dunæ-Dunen) Abbatia, B. Mariæ de Dunia—a Bruges—Abbaye des Citeaux.”—*Dictionnaire des Abbaies*, MIGNE.

“A.D. 1573. Monasterium de Dunis relicto habitu Saviniacensi—ad ordinem Cisterciensem transit.”—*Ex Anonymi Blandinensis Appendicula in tom. XIV. Histor. des Gaules et de la France.*

THE
LIFE OF BLESSED FRANCO.



Vita Beati Franconis.

I.

*Franco
Cruce
signatur.*

QUIDAM miles inclytus, ortu Brabantinus,
Franco dictus nomine, corde leoninus,
Fieri disposuit Christi peregrinus,
Nam sic eum monuit, Spiritus Divinus.

II.

Cruce salutiferâ decrevit signari,
Pro fide Catholicâ volens præliari,
Quo audito, plurimi voluntate pari,
Sunt signati milites signo salutari.

III.

Franco, crucis nobili titulo signatus,
Armis militaribus fuit adornatus,
Equis et divitiis satis sublimatus,
Et præclara militum turbâ [con] stipatus.



THE LIFE OF BLESSED FRANCO.

I.

A SOLDIER, whose *time-honoured line* from Brabant nobles started,
Hight FRANCO, was he known by name, by nature lion-hearted,
From home and all its pleasures he to serve his Lord departed,
Such holy resolution, 'twas God's Spirit, sure, imparted.

*Franco as-
sumes the
Cross.*

II.

The symbol of his saving Faith, conspicuous on his shoulder,
Proclaimed the Christian combatant to every beholder,
At fame whereof, like-minded men in spirit growing bolder
Adopted the like precious sign, their holy band to solder.

III.

When Franco, as Crusader, thus made known his designation,
Don'd mail of proof and richly wrought, beseeming his high station,
With store of wealth, and steeds equipped, for martial equitation,
He heads and leads a chosen band of nobles of his nation.

*Franco
Cruce
signatur.*

IV.

Postquam terras plurimas Franco peragravit,
Tandem vento prospero, mare transfretavit,
Et cum suis sociis terram subintravit,
In quâ Christus Dominus mortem toleravit.

V.

Tandem rumor perculit aures Paganorum
Quod venisset plurima gens Christianorum,
Quæ vellet subvertere cultus idolorum
Et sibi subdicere regna Chaldæorum.

VI.

Tunc Pagani nimium fremere cœperunt,
Et magnum exercitum colligi fecerunt
Ac nostros invadere viros decreverunt,
Sed nostri viriliter eis restiterunt.

VII.

Franco miles inclytus, Christianus verus
In congressu prælii audax et severus,
Et cum eo pariter Dominus Sugerus
Invaserunt barbaros, velut Oliverus.

IV.

Brave Franco then, o'er many lands in quest of venture going,
At length upon the deep sets sail, with favouring breezes blowing,
And with his band, that Holy Land, he seeks the Paynim foe in,
Where, for man's sake, the Lord of Life endured his last death woe in.

*Franco as-
sumes the
Cross.*

V.

Quick flies the bruit—the Paynim ear is speedily astounded [ed,
With news that Red-Cross Knights in force have fierce defiance sound-
Proclaiming, that all Idol-worship soon shall be confounded,
And they must have Christ's Sepulchre, and all the region round it.

VI.

Whereon, the haughty Paynim foe, in fiercest fury raging,
Throughout their coasts, a mighty host, with speed began engaging,
Against our Red-Cross Chivalry a conflict dire presaging,
While ours again stood prompt and firm, the hottest strife for waging.

VII.

Our Franco, then, who loved alike his Christian faith and glory,
Ruthless and daring ever in the battle field so gory,
With his brave knight Sir Sugerus, who to sustain him swore, he
Made onslaught on the Paynim host, like Palladin of story.

VIII.

Sed cum istis alii milites fuerunt
Qui paganos perfidos validè presserunt,
Et eosdem vertere terga compulerunt,
Et de ipsis maximam stragem reliquerunt.

IX.

Quidam miles extitit ex Pagana gente
Giganteus corpore, ac superbus mente
Qui gerebat sæpius voce vehemente,
Singulare prælium, ipso hoc petente.

X.

Cumque sæpe gereret bellum singulare
Et nullus præsumeret cum illo pugnare,
Franco videns milites [nostros] titubare
Cum pagano voluit bellum attentare.

XI.

Mox uterque propriis armis se armavit
Et per longum spatium pariter pugnavit,
Tandem ope Domini Saracenem stravit
Et de hoste barbaro Franco triumphavit.

*Saracenum
gigantem
singulari
certamine
stravit.*

VIII.

And to their aid came other knights, with equal resolution,
Who on the faithless Infidel did deadly execution,
Until their broken ranks gave way, in general confusion,
And bleeding corpses strewed the field in wide-spread distribution.

IX.

Then from the Pagan ranks stood forth a chief of haughty bearing,
In stature as gigantic, as in spirit proud and daring,
Whose wont it was to taunt our knights, by boastfully declaring
That he sought a foe in single fight, which none besides should share in.

*He slays a
gigantic
Saracen in
single
combat.*

X.

His challenge thus for many days this doughty chief repeating,
And none of our's adventuring in single fight a beating;
When Franco saw his fellows rather thinking of retreating,
He resolved to give the Pagan foe the oft-demanded meeting.

XI.

Then each in armour "cap-a-pie" into the lists descended,
And there long time with equal might and fortune they contended,
At length the Christian victor stood, by heavenly help defended,
And in Saracen discomfiture the well fought battle ended.

*Saraceni
petunt
treugas.*

XII.

Tunc Pagani territi valde stupuerunt
Et de morte militis tanti doluerunt,
Qui voce unanimi treugas petierunt
Nam Franconem cernere nostrum voluerunt.

XIII.

Franco propter corporis miram probitatem
Habens apud milites famæ claritatem,
Tantam coram omnibus morum honestatem
Studuit ostendere, ac humilitatem.

XIV.

Nil in ejus corpore, nil in ejus ore
Apparere potuit quod molestum fore
Posset intuentibus, propter quod amore
Plurimorum dignior fuit et honore.

XV.

*Ad Sol-
danum
Franco
Legatus
mittitur.*

Quia tantâ gratiâ erat illustratus,
Et virtute corporis omnibus prælatus,
Ad Soldanum Principem missus est legatus
Aliis militibus tribus sociatus.

XII.

Thereat the Pagan enemy, much humbled and confounded,
And, by their foremost champion's death, sore troubled and astounded,
With one consent, a call for truce their trumpets loudly sounded,
For their desire to gaze upon our hero was unbounded.

The Saracens seek a truce.

XIII.

Alike among his enemies and those of his own nation
Were Franco's strength and courage held in common estimation,
To which his moral virtues super-added reputation
All graced with sweet humility devoid of ostentation.

XIV.

For nor in Franco's countenance, nor yet in his demeanour,
Could aught afford beholders a pretext for disdain, or
Antipathy; and so he grew, of general love a gainer,
And his title to the best esteem of all grew daily plainer.

XV.

And being thus by gracious gifts in spirit illustrated,
And by corporeal excellence above his peers elated,
On mission to the Soldan Prince see Franco delegated,
Three other military knights with him associated.

Franco is sent ambassador to the Soldan.

*Ad Solda-
num Franco
legatus
mittitur.*

XVI.

Causa talis extitit hujus missionis,
Quia pacis foedera et conventionis
Soldanus petierit ut in his personis,
Valeret agnoscere faciem Franconis.

XVII.

Nam Franconis probitas nota et audita,
Soldanum reddiderat stupefactum ita
Quod ab ipso foedera pacis expetita
Essent, ut sic vivere tutâ possit vitâ.

XVIII.

Huic Franconi filii gemini fuerunt
Qui cum ipso pariter mare transierunt
Et in armis bellicis, valde floruerunt
Sed pro Christi nomine post occubuerunt.

XIX.

*Fit mona-
chus Villa-
rensis.*

Tandem Franco inclytus dignus collaudari
Probus in militia quondam Sæculari
Luxum spernans sæculi factus in Villari
Monachus, sub habitu vixit regulari.

XVI.

'Tis needful that we here should tell the reason of this mission.
'Twas that the Soldan had desired a treaty on condition,
Which, while discussing in detail, of Franco's disposition
And person he might leisurely make careful perquisition.

*Franco is
sent am-
bassador to
the Soldan.*

XVII.

For Franco's probity, of known and far-voiced estimation,
Had so impressed the Soldan's mind with trust and admiration,
That from a treaty made by him he had full expectation [nation.
That firm and 'stablished peace would grow, both to himself and

XVIII.

Twin sons had been to Franco born, and in his heart deep cherished,
Who, crossing with their sire the sea, like holy purpose nourished.
Long time in fame for warlike deeds their reputation flourished,
Until, contending for God's cause on battle field, they perished.

XIX.

At length our knight, with warlike fame, in spirit fully sated,
And with a world-wide repute, by all men celebrated,
Spurning a life of luxury for one more regulated,
At VILLARE he vowed himself a monk associated.

*He becomes
a monk at
Villare.*

*Fit mona-
chus Villa-
rensis.*

XX.

Ipse post militiæ cursum temporalis
Illustratus gratiâ doni spiritualis,
Esse Christi cupiens miles specialis
In hoc domo monachus factus est claustralis.

XXI.

Ultra modum placidus, dulcis et benignus
Ob ætatis senium candidus ut Cygnus
Blandus et affabilis, ac amari dignus
In se Sancti Spiritus, possidebat pignus.

XXII.

Nam sanctam Ecclesiam sæpe frequentabat
Missarum mysteria lætus auscultabat,
Et quas scire poterat laudes personabat,
Ac cœlestem gloriam mente ruminabat.

XXIII.

Ejus conversatio dulcis et jocosa,
Valde commendabilis, et religiosa
Ita cunctis fratribus fuit gratiosa
Quod nec gravis extitit, nec fastidiosa.

XX.

This veteran of many fights, his earthly warfare ended,
By grace of God from Satan's wiles in spirit well defended,
As a vow'd soldier in God's ranks, to close his life intended,
So here to live, a cloistered monk, he resolutely wended.

*He becomes
a monk at
Villare.*

XXI.

A placid spirit o'er his face shed forth a holy brightness; [ness:
Streamed from his head his hoary locks, in almost swan-down white-
He won and well deserved our love, by affable politeness,
God's Spirit ever guiding him in ways of true uprightness.

XXII.

For, constant to the holy Fane, we saw his footsteps wending;
When there, to altar mysteries, devout attention lending;
Then to his best ability, his lauds to God-ward sending,
To heavenly themes and glories all his meditations tending.

XXIII.

Whenever he conversed, we found a cheerful spirit move him,
He spoke, too, so religiously, who heard must needs approve him;
Hence, all the brotherhood at last came cordially to love him,
For he never *prosed*, nor spoke to one, as if he felt above him.

*Fit mona-
chus Villa-
rensis.*

XXIV.

Sanctam Matrem Domini valde honorabat
Ac eandem Virginem sæpe salutabat,
Et seipsum precibus ejus commendabat
Nam per ipsam fieri salvum se sperabat.

XXV.

Hic per claustrum quoties transiens meavit.
Hinc et hinc ad Monachos caput inclinavit
Et sic nutu capitis eos salutavit
Quos affectu intimo plurimum amavit.

XXVI.

Noster Franco debili senio gravatus
Ad dulce colloquium fratrum convocatus
Ab his aliquotiens est interrogatus
Ut eis exponeret modum sui status.

XXVII.

*Quid de
ordine
sentiret.*

Quid de nostro ordine sibi videretur
Utrum delectabilis ei haberetur,
Et in suo animo quid meditaretur
Super hoc in medio eis fateretur.

XXIV.

The Mother of our Lord he held in greatest estimation,
And frequently would "hail" her with Angelic Salutation;
Her suffrages still seeking, with an earnest impetration,
As hoping thus, and through her help, to forward his salvation.

*He becomes
a monk at
Villare.*

XXV.

When passing through the cloisters, 'twas with general salutation,
Bowing his head, this way and that, in courteous inclination;
A kindlier nod, and given with more friendly animation,
He kept for those who in his love possess'd an inner station.

XXVI.

Weakness and age o'er Franco now are obviously stealing,
So his brethren ask'd more earnestly free converse he would deal in;
And they were found, day after day, more pressingly appealing,
That he would give expression to his state of mind and feeling.

XXVII.

More specially concerning the rule of our profession,
The brethren desired to know, if with real prepossession,
And whether in his inmost soul, and genuine impression,
He deemed it the best mode of life? they pressed for free confession.

*His opinion
of the
Order.*

*Quid de
ordine
sentiret.*

XXVIII.

At ejus responsio talis existebat
Nam nobis presentibus dicere solebat
Quod statuta ordinis valde diligebat
Et cunctis deliciis mundi preferebat.

XXIX.

Solebat asserere gloriam mundanam
Esse sine dubio frivolam et vanam
Quisquis ergo possidet mentem Christianam,
Eam confitebitur stultam et insanam.

XXX.

Sed sancta religio est salutis via
Animæ lætitia et philosophia
Vera et melliflua cordis melodia
Ex qua Christus pascitur, et Virgo Maria.

XXXI.

*In Infir-
matorio
qualis
fuerit.*

Sæpe Franco febribus duris ægrotabat
Ipse nihilominus missas frequentabat
Unde Infirmarius,* ipsum increpabat
Et ut requiesceret eum exorabat.

* "*Infirarius*—propiè—"Frater cui cura infirmorum commissa est."—DU CANGE.

XXVIII.

Thus questioned, to us* fellow-monks assembled round his bed, he
Was ever wont to make response in answer frank and ready,
And to the world and its delights, avowing himself dead, he
Professed he loved the Order's rule with an affection steady.

*His opinion
of the
Order.*

XXIX.

He who had borne him full long heroical, and knightly,
Was wont to estimate at last all mundane glory slightly;
“For,” quoth he, “who discerns the mind of Jesus Christ arightly,
Will ever hold this world and its mad vanities but lightly.

XXX.

“But pure religion, while it brings the soul unto salvation,
Infuses true philosophy and mental elevation,
Gives the sweet beat of happiness to every heart's pulsation,
Yielding honour to the Virgin—to the Saviour exaltation.”

XXXI.

Now, Franco's frame with ague fits was frequently affected,
But still the Holy Sacrifice he never yet neglected;
Whereupon the convent leech kindly counsel interjected,
And prayed his aged brother not to slight it or reject it.

*How he
demeaned
him in the
Infirmary.*

* This verse would seem to indicate that Franco and his biographer were cotemporaries, and thus gives us within a century or so the date of the narrative.

*In Infir-
matorio
qualis
fuerit.*

XXXII.

Dicens “Franco remane—vinum tibi dabo
Et te bonis epulis pascam et cibabo,
Ego missam sacram hodie celebrabo
Et in missæ canone pro te exorabo.”

XXXIII.

Ille velut turbidus vinum respuebat
Et promissas epulas penitus spernebat
Missam sacratissimam audire volebat
In quâ salus animæ tota consistebat.

XXXIV.

Dum in suo lectulo Franco recubaret
Et oblatum sumere cibum recusaret
Diximus aliquando ut se elevaret
Et ad missæ sonitum ire festinaret.

XXXV.

Hæc autem fallaciter, illi dicebamus
Nam quod ipse sumeret cibum volebamus
Quia nimis debilem ipsum videbamus
Cujus ægritudini nos condolebamus.

XXXII.

Saying, "Franco stay at home, 'tis plain, that wine not mass you're need-
I'll order you a good repast, you want more generous feeding, [ing,
To day I'll celebrate the Mass, be sure that not unheeding,
In due place in the Canon, I'll for you be interceding."

*How he
demeaned
him in the
Infirmary.*

XXXIII.

But Franco as disturbed in mind, the offer'd wine refusing,
And making light of generous food, which "perishes in using,"
Still to hear Mass in preference, his brethren saw him chusing,
As tending to that health of soul he ever kept his views in.

XXXIV.

While thus upon his simple couch old Franco lay reclining,
And steadily rejected all suggestions about dining,
At length we told him, if he wished to be at Mass due time in,
He must needs get up and dress, for the "sacring Bell"* was chiming

XXXV.

But this was said to win him, by allowable deception,
For all desired he should partake of our prepared refection,
His weakness being evident on cursory inspection,
Causing to the brotherhood deep and general dejection.

* The small bell whose tinkle announces the Elevation of the Host, after which, in the estimation of the devout, "the benefit of the Mass" is null and void to all late comers.

*In Infir-
matorio
qualis
fuerit.*

XXXVI.

Surgens mox de lectulo vestes induebat
Et ad oratorium iter dirigebat
Qui post longum spatium rediens sumebat
Quos [gravis] infirmarius cibos ingerebat.

XXXVII.

Comedebat placide quod ei dabatur
Licet esset modicum, non indignabatur
Sed reddebat gratias, et reverebatur
Quorum ministerio senex pascebatur.

XXXVIII.

Semper Deo gratias reddere curavit
Nec pro cibo corporis unquam murmuravit,
Credo quod de fratribus nullum contristavit.
Sed in pace omnium vitam consummavit.

XXXIX.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

Ante suum obitum quidam dixit ei
Nollem hic ut obitus et tui et mei
Hora esset eadem, horâque diei
Compari ad gloriam veniremus Dei.

XXXVI.

Then, Franco rising from his couch, and his habit quick enduing
We saw him to the Oratory his wonted way pursuing,
Whence returning after orison, he took without eschewing
The food our kind mediciner had meanwhile placed his view in.

*How he
demeaned
him in the
Infirmary.*

XXXVII.

He ate with placid thankfulness his portion as presented,
And tho' it might be stinted, no one saw him discontented.
But from his heart deep gratitude he ever shewed, and meant it,
To all who ministered his food, both those who served and sent it.

XXXVIII.

Grace after meals, as due to God, he was always found returning,
He 'twixt dainty food and coarser never shewed the least discerning,
I'm sure that no unkind thought from a brother ever earning,
In peace with God and man he passed the time of his sojourning.

XXXIX.

Before his death a certain monk was heard to Franco saying,
"Dear brother when we both are found the debt of nature paying,
I trust we shall not both depart the self same hour or day in,
For in company with you I'd scarce to glory find my way in."

*His
confidence
in Christ.*

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

XL.

Franco ille reddidit responsionem,
“ Juste nolles fieri hanc conjunctionem
Nam ob mei transitûs occupationem
Tuam Deus sperneret resolutionem.

XLI.

“ Nam in meo transitu Deus occupatus
Tanto erit studio, quod tu refutatus
Fores a lætitia, aut certe dilatus
Et sic tuus spiritus esset desolatus.

XLII.

“ Nam pro certo noveris Deum exultare
Cum meum contingeret spiritum migrare,
Et studebunt Angeli sancti festinare
Ac lætantes animam meam deportare.

XLIII.

“ Cum me sursum deferent Angeli beati
Sic in meo transitu erunt occupati,
Quod de tuo obitu nihil jocundati
Suæ nollent addere te societati.”

XL.

To this suggestion Franco was as prompt in thus replying,
“ You would act with proper prudence any such conjunction flying.
For God will be so occupied with me in act of dying,
That your appeals, he'll sure be found neglecting or denying.

*His
confidence
in Christ.*

XLI.

“ For when my soul departs to take its place the heavenly zone in,
God will be so engaged with me, that all your claims disowning,
Or at the least to heavenly joys, your entrance then postponing,
Your spirit will be left ‘ without,’ all desolate and moaning.

XLII.

“ For, rest assured, the Deity will then be celebrating
The day which sees my pardon'd soul from earth to heaven migrating,
And angel hosts will flock around, all anxiously awaiting,
Each to fulfil his ordered part in my soul's deportating.

XLIII.

“ Those blessed ones will, each and all, find such sweet occupation
In aiding me while I proceed in my aërostation,
That your decease, should you die then, will cause no great sensation,
Nor will they welcome you above, with any great elation.”

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

XLIV.

Hoc vir sanctus voluit dicere jocosè
Et non infideliter, nec præsumptuosè,
Nam per fidem noverat junctum sic Deo, se,
Quod nihil adstrueret superstitiosè.

XLV.

De Christi clementiâ, valde confidebat
Nam sua pericula sæpe referebat
Quæ pro Christo fuerat passus, et dicebat
Quod sibi ex debito parcere debebat.

XLVI.

“ Nam pro nobis graviter Christus flagellatus
Fellis amarissimi poculo potatus,
Manus fossas habuit, et perfossum latus
Et in quibus cumque partibus fuit perforatus.

XLVII.

“ Et ego pericula si vellem narrare.
Quæ pro Christo pertuli pergens ultra mare.
Cum paganos perfidos coëpi expugnare
Christianam cupiens fidem propagare.

XLIV.

The good man spoke this jestingly, for in his humble spirit
Nought was there of the scoffer, nor presumption of his merit,
For knowing, that by faith a place he would with God inherit,
He was free from superstition, as from aught that could infer it.

His confidence in Christ.

XLV.

But his trust in saving grace of Christ was very fixt and daring,
For he constantly recounted the great dangers he had share in,
Which being all for Christ endured, he never shunn'd declaring,
That Christ must needs to him in turn be gracious and forbearing.

XLVI.

“For as Christ was sharply scourged, ere to Calvary he wended,
And drained the cup where gall and myrrh in bitter potion blended,
Pierced hands and wounded side he shewed, while on the cross extend-
And for us diversly tortured, his patient life he ended. [ed,

XLVII.

“Were I to tell” [quoth Franco then] “the varied shapes of danger
Wherein for Christ I ventured, over trackless seas a ranger,
How oft a deadly fight I waged against the pagan stranger,
All to propagate the faith of Him whose birthplace was a manger.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

XLVIII.

“ Vere possum dicere fui vulneratus,
In bello sæpissime morti pene datus
Inter hostes medios, fere trucidatus
Famê,—siti,—frigore,—sæpe cruciatus.

XLIX.

“ Propter hæc pericula, quæ valde gaudenter
Pro Christo sustinui, dico confidenter
Quod ejus dulcissima pietas libenter
Mihi debet parcere, prompte ac libenter.

L.

“ Absit hoc a Domini dulci pietate
Ut me suum monachum a societate
Sanctorum abjiciat, qui in caritate
Et in vera fidei vixi firmitate.

LI.

“ Ipse pius Dominus non damnationem
Hominis desiderans, sed salvationem,
Mihi reddet optimam retributionem
Pro quo multam pertuli tribulationem.”

XLVIII.

“ For Him, good sooth, I oft was found to wounds my bosom baring,
The chance of death oft underwent in mortal conflict sharing,
’Mid hostile hosts I often risked the penalty of daring,
Cold, hunger, thirst oft tried me sore, for Christ’s sake little caring.

His confidence in Christ.

XLIX.

“ For all these dangers, which for Christ, with free and willing spirit,
I have endured, I, full assured, in confidence infer it,
That surely he, in clemency, will give me to inherit
That free and full salvation, which at his hands I merit.

L.

“ Far be it from my gracious Lord, of mercy beyond doubt, vast,
That I, his own vow’d servant, should from the saints be outcast,
Me, who my latter end of life have all in works devout past, [fast.
And the pure ‘faith which works by love’ have firmly held throughout

LI.

“ That gracious Lord, who willeth not the vilest man’s damnation,
But rather that from ways of death he turn him to salvation,
Will surely in his justice give eternal compensation
To me who have for Him endured such varied tribulation.”

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

LII.

Hic in sui obitus horâ exultavit
Et quædam dulsisona cantica cantavit*
Sed postquam ad ultimum canere cessavit
Conridendo proprium Spiritum efflavit.

LIII.

Dum adhuc in lectulo moriens jaceret
Et jam verbum penitus loqui non valeret
Sed quoddam presentiens gaudium rideret
Quæsièrant aliqui fratres quid videret.

LIV.

Credo quod angelicos spiritus cernebat
Vel adesse Domini matrem sentiebat
De cujus presentiâ plurimum gaudebat
Et ob hoc in jubilo risum emittebat.

LV.

Cumque esset spiritum reddere paratus
Ex defectu virium jam debilitatus,
Et multis singultibus diu fatigatus
Quidam frater astitit ei deputatus.

* "*Decantavit.*" Orig.

LII.

[ing

Great thoughts like these in life's last hour, to Franco's soul were bring-
Such joy, that bursts of holy song we heard him loudly singing,
Even when these ceased, and in despite of death tho' sharply stinging,
A smile was on his lip, the while his soul its flight was winging.

*His con-
fidence in
Christ.*

LIII.

When, seemingly insensible, in very act of dying,
Worn out and speechless, on his couch the holy man was lying,
His smile expressed that heavenly joys already he was eyeing,
Hence, the brethren to know what he saw, were anxiously sighing.

LIV.

My belief is that from earthly film his parting spirit clearing
Saw angel hosts, or else, perhaps, the blest Madonna nearing,
And that as he loved and longed for the day of their appearing,
The rapture of his soul spoke in that gentle laugh and cheering.

LV.

The fatal moment drawing near, life's struggle well nigh ended,
The last debility at hand, his forces all expended,
His frame convulsed and wearied lying on his couch extended,
A brother chosen for the duty, nigh his bed attended.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

LVI.

Hoc præclaram obtulit salutationem
Gloriosæ virginis, cujus mentionem
Frater Franco audiens, exultationem
Concipit mirabilem ac devotionem.

LVII.

Simplices a callidis solent exprobrari
Et ipsorum opera bona depravari
Et quamvis non valeant penitus nigrari
Tamen ea paulum constat denigrari.

LVIII.

Unde per silentium nolo occultare
Sed hoc manifestius volo declarare
Quod cum Franco debuit cursum consummare
Quoddam dulce canticum cœpit decantare.

LIX.

Sed præsentibus aliqui quia nesciebant
Quid hoc esset canticum, aut intelligebant
Quendam ad alterutrum risum emittebant
Et tanquam ludibria vana deridebant.

LVI.

Close at his ear, he sounded forth the Angel salutation,
“Hail Mary, blessed one,” he said, and at the recitation
Franco no sooner heard the sound, than sudden exultation
He most miraculously shewed, conjoined to veneration.

*His confidence in
Christ.*

LVII.

Some harden'd ones at simple folk are frequently found jeering,
Nor can the best works of the just escape their wicked sneering,
They cannot to their full content shew good men black appearing,
Still they contrive with filth enough to give them some besmearing.

LVIII.

Now there's a certain shameful fact I feel compelled to mention,
And in candour to submit it to the general attention,
When Franco's soul was on the point of heavenly ascension,
He sang a song of sweetness nigh surpassing comprehension.

LIX.

But some of those around the bed, who neither comprehended
The old man's “*Euthanasia*,” nor what his song intended,
From lip to lip, and eye to eye, derisive smile extended,
And in making mock of what they heard, these foolish men offended.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

LX.

Tunc unus ex monachis præsens assistebat
Qui Franconem integro corde diligebat
Et affectu sedulo ei serviebat
Qui ridentes monachos videns condolebat.

LXI.

Mox et motu subito dixit ad Franconem
“Frater Franco habeo indignationem
Nam sunt hi qui faciunt cachinnationem
Propter vestrum canticum et devotionem.

LXII.

“Si ex Dei canitur istud voluntate,
Canticum tunc suggerens rogo vos cantate,
Et ridentes monachos istos confutate
De ipsorum stolidâ incredulitate.”

LXIII.

Franco licet moriens statim exultare
Et quendam versiculum cœpit decantare
Tanquam vellet dicere,—“ volo confutare
Monachos quos audio mihi insultare.”

LX.

Thereat a brother standing by, in sorrowful dejection,
Who loved the aged Franco with a true entire affection,
And watched his parting moments, with most sedulous inspection,
In spirit stirred, reproved these men with suitable correction.

His confidence in Christ.

LXI.

For presently this friendly monk his aged friend addressing,
Said:—"Brother, I feel indignation I can't help confessing,
When I find certain scoffers here their mockery expressing,
While they hear you hymning goodly songs, and piety professing.

LXII.

"Now if, as I believe, you sang by heavenly inspiration,
Sing one more hymn I pray you of God's direct dictation,
And give those godless scoffing ones such thorough confutation,
That they may feel ashamed for their unbelieving cachinnation."

LXIII.

Then Franco, although moribund, as if this wish consulting,
Began at once a hymn divine, and sang in strains exulting,
As he would say "my holy lay, I trust, will this result in,
That I shall shame these ribald monks who have been thus insulting.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

LXIV.

“Fratres, ne miremini quia exultavi
Et sanctum versiculum quendam decantavi,
Quoniam prospicio Deum quem amavi
Et expecto gloriam semper quam optavi.”

LXV.

Eant et superbiant nunc ostentatores,
Floreant et rideant laudis amatores
Jactent phylacteria fratrum contemtores
Fimbrias magnificent, sectentur honores.

LXVI.

Sed pulchris incedere stolis gloriantes
Deferant hic propriam famam [as]sectantes,
Sero poenitentiam agant ululantes
Cum a suis fratribus oleum rogantes.

LXVII.

Nihil prorsus invenient præter egestatem,
Ergo suæ corrigant vitæ pravitatem,
Et vitam considerent, ac simplicitatem,
Hujus nostri monachi qui per paupertatem.

LXIV.

“Nay, Brethren, pray you, think no scorn, if I have been elated,
And in a holy hymn of praise my Saviour celebrated;
For with a clear unclouded view of God my soul is sated,
And I hail the glory near at hand for which I long have waited.”

His confidence in
Christ.

LXV.

Go now your ways, all who maintain a proud and boastful bearing;
Laugh and enjoy your hour, all you for worldly praises caring,
Ye brethren-mockers boastfully broad phylacteries wearing, [ing.
Make fine your broidered hems, and go, all this world's honours shar-

LXVI.

But know ye this, ye who go brave, thus worldly aims pursuing,
And running after baubles which are luring you to ruin,
A day will come when you too late in sorrow *ullalu-ing*,*
From your now despised brothers will *Viaticum* be suing.

LXVII.

From such a life but misery can be at last expected,
'Twere therefore well such pravity should timely be corrected,
And that scoffers on the piety and virtue had reflected,
Of this their humble brother monk, who in poverty dejected,

* Should this term be considered as a ludicrous application of the word used to express the wild “*Irish cry*” of sorrow, it should be recollected that it is also, almost *ad literam*, a rendering of the *Latin* original, and is but another proof of affinity between the “barbarous Irish language” and other dialects of remote antiquity; in fact, both expressive words seem to be but the *wail itself* reduced to syllables.

*Ejus in
Christum
fiducia.*

LXVIII.

Obtinere meruit coeli ubertates
Nam postquam deseruit mundi vanitates
Pertulit ut potuit per tranquillitates,
Ordinis duritiam et austeritates.

LXIX.

Quia vixit placide in religione,
Et honesta floruit conversatione,
Nunc in cœlo positus gaudet regione,
Ac beatâ fruitur Dei visione.

LXX.

Nos ad suum trahere velit mansionem,
Post carnis ab animâ separationem
Qui humani generis ad redemptionem
Nostræ carnis induit incarnationem.

LXXI.

CHRISTUS DEI FILIUS mortis triumphator,
JESUS CHRISTUS omnium rerum Gubernator,
JESUS CHRISTUS omnium hominum Salvator,
Hujus sancti Ordinis Pius Conservator.

LXVIII.

Had merited and gained at last in Heaven abounding treasure;
For after he found grace to leave the world's vain lure of pleasure,
He spent his long and tranquil life performing in just measure
Our Order's rule austere, with scarce an interval of leisure.

His confidence in Christ.

LXIX.

And for that thus he passed his days in strictness of his Order,
And nor in word or act was found once guilty of disorder,
He now enjoys his destined place within the heavenly border,
Blest with a full near vision of his God and great rewarder.

LXX.

So may HE bring us all to bliss, within his special glory,
When the spirit shall put off the guise which here on earth it bore—He
Who glory left, and in the flesh the form of servant wore—He
Who this endured to ransom us—as tells the Gospel story.

LXXI.

CHRIST, the incarnate *Son of God*, o'er death the victory gaining,
JESUS CHRIST o'er Heaven and earth triumphant ever reigning,
JESUS CHRIST, the ransom of all forfeit souls obtaining—
And this our holy order in prosperity sustaining.

LXXII.

Hæc de nostro breviter dicta sunt FRANCONÉ,
Qui a carnis penitus liber passione
Et omni periculo ac tentatione,
Magna nunc circumdatur exultatione.

LXXIII.

Et quia viriliter stetit in agone,
Nec devictus aliquâ tribulatione,
Discessit ab ordinis observatione,
Habet nunc perpetuæ gloriam coronæ.

LXXIV.

Ergo fratres sæculi luxum fugiamus,
Noxas et divitias penitus spernamus,
Et FRANCONIS semitas sequi studeamus,
Ut ipsius gloriam simul habeamus.

LXXV.

Stabiles in ordine nostro persistamus,
Et pro CHRISTO quælibet dura perferamus,
Ut post hoc exilium ipsum videamus,
Et pro his laboribus, tandem gaudeamus.

LXXII.

Thus much of our dear Franco I have briefly here related,
Who from all sufferings of the flesh now fully liberated,
And from danger of temptation to his heavenly rest translated,
Encompassed round with glory sits triumphant and elated.

LXXIII.

And for that he in dying bravely bore agonization,
And never in his patient life, in pressure of temptation,
Relaxed in aught the strictness of his order's Observation,
He wears his crown of glory now, eternal in duration.

LXXIV.

Hence, Brethren, be we ever found the world's enticements flying,
All noxious joys and lures of wealth incessantly denying,
And to walk in Franco's footsteps, all our energies applying,
That we share his after glory, when like him devoutly dying.

LXXV.

Ever firm in our order-rule be we found persevering,
And what may else for Christ befall, with equal patience bearing,
So face to face in bliss, we, now his earthly exile sharing,
May then be found, his crown of joy, through endless ages wearing.

LXXVI.

Summum erit gaudium cum nos majestatem,
Et ipsam videbimus Christi claritatem,
Tunc pacem habebimus et tranquillitatem,
Ac bonorum copiam et jocunditatem.

LXXVII.

Gaude pleno gaudio domus de VILLARE,
Quæ, donante Domino, hujus tam præclari,
Meruisti corpore fratris illustrari,
Cujus sanctis precibus potes adjuvari.*

LXXVIII.

Quia cibus nimius solet generare,
Vomitum, propterea nolo prolongare,
Opus hoc ulterius, sed O Thoma clare,
Meam hic terminiam volo terminare.

LXXIX.

Hanc in fine operis Domum commendare,
Et dignis præconiis volo sublimare,
Quam virtutem floribus largius vernare,
Et districte ordinem novi observare.

* *Adunari*, orig. : but a critical friend sanctions me in correcting this as a mistake.

LXXVI.

What joy for us, our Saviour Lord in majesty beholding,
And his glory in its brightness on vision all unfolding,
In tranquil peace the shining ranks of happy souls enroll'd in,
Of good and joy unspeakable our portion we'll be holding.

LXXVII.

What joy is thine—by gift divine—VILLARE, where remaining,
Our Franco's holy body has our cemetery lain in,
Since in his merits still renown throughout the world obtaining,
Thou by his suffrages above fresh grace art daily gaining.

LXXVIII.

And now, since food, used to excess, to nausea but tendeth,
And prolixity to readers a like tedium portendeth,
Then lest I tire thee Thomas,* who a kind attention lendeth,
Here of our Franco's life and death, my true narration endeth.

LXXIX.

Yet must I say a word, before I make a final ending,
To general approbation our Cœnobium commending,
Which every day to fresh advance in holiness is tending,
And its inmates to the order-rules more rigidly attending.

* There is no clue to guide us to the individual to whom the narrative seems to be addressed—probably the *then* superior of the convent.

LXXX.

Congruenti nomine potest vocitari,
Fons misericordiæ domus de VILLARI,
Quia condescendere, et opitulari,
Cunctis indigentibus, studet opere pari.

LXXXI.

Talis in perpetuum Domus sit beata,
Quæ in fide congruâ firmiter fundata,
Et bonorum operum curis occupata,
Deo et hominibus placens est et grata.

LXXXII.

Christus hanc juvamine tuto præmunire,
Et a cunctis hostibus volet custodire,
Ac meam propitius precem exaudire,
Ad se domesticos faciat venire. Amen.

Finis Vitæ Beati Franconis.

LXXX.

Be ever known VILLARE's dome, and had in estimation,
An open fount whence pity flows in free opitulation,
To help the wants of needy ones, of every name and nation,
Seems of each pious inmate here the daily occupation.

LXXXI.

So may this House for ever stand enriched with fullest blessing,
The true and changeless faith of its first founder still professing,
And to the prize, of our high call, while diligently pressing,
In favour both with God and man, still steadily progressing.

LXXXII.

In CHRIST's unfailing providence be our protection founded,
With HIM as safe-guard, night and day, be all our foes confounded,
And through HIM, acceptable with God, my prayer still be sounded,
Until before His throne I join the praising host around it.

R.

Here endeth the Life of "Blessed Franco."

APPENDIX I.

(GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS' TOPOGRAPHIA HIBERNIÆ "DE CLERICIS ET MONASTICIS.")

(*Introduction*, p. ix.)

GIRALDUS Cambrensis has been over and over again answered and accused, as the calumniator of Ireland, in his topographic account of the state of things he pretends to have found there on his arrival among the English Invaders, in the twelfth century. It is to be regretted that some refutations which appeared* almost contemporaneously with the topography itself (about A.D. 1190), have not come down to us; and it is unfortunate that the nearest assailants whose attempts to overthrow the positions of Giraldus are accessible to us, wrote at least *four hundred* years after their antagonist. Stephen White's "Cambrensis Eversus," is but imperfectly preserved, and although Dr. Lynche's work of the same name is complete and elaborate, still he betrays his sense of coming late into the field, in this controversy, in the labour he bestows in proving that truism, "that *time* cannot invest error with authority," and in enforcing Tertullian's axiom,† that "neither lapse of time, popular opinion, nor privilege of country, can establish any prescription against truth," while a modern and admiring

* This rests on Giraldus' *own* testimony, but his words are ambiguous—"Opus non ignobile nostrum topographiam livor laniat et detractat." It is not clear from this whether the "gall of bitterness," gendered by his "espial of the nakedness of the land," had actually overflowed into ink-shed then. That it did so in after generations we know.

† "Neminem posse prescribere contra veritatem,
Non spatium temporis, non favorem hominis
Non privilegium regionum——"

Tertul. de Virg. Veland.

editor candidly owns that "in some of his attempts at refutation Dr. Lynche has not been successful."

With this statement, that the author stands questioned as to veracity, I annex here a most epigrammatic extract from Giraldus, describing the habits and morals of the Irish Monks of his day, as sadly contrasted to the abstemious sobriety of the Continental Cistercians. Whether the topographer would point an antithesis at the expense of truth, whether the Church man would calumniate his own cloth and confreres without grounds, or whether that *English* contempt for the "wild Irish," which is too much a national characteristic to-day, began to operate so long ago as the era of Gerald Barry, these are points which I must leave to the discernment and judgment of the reader to determine. I give the extract as I find it in the author, with a version to which the antithetic character of the original has tempted me.

"Sed utinam, post longa Jejunia, tam sobrii fuerint quam serii,—tam veri quam severi, tam puri quam duri—tam existentes quam apparentes—Inter tot enim millia vix unum invenies—qui post jugem tam Jejuniorum quam orationum instantiam, vino variisque potionibus, diurnos labores enormius* quam deceret noctu non redimat; Diem itaque naturalem tanquam ex æquo dividentes, lucidaque spiritui, tempora nocturna quoque carni dedicantes, sicut de luce lucis operibus indulgent—sic et in tenebris, ad tenebrarum opera convertuntur. Unde et hoc pro miraculo duci potest, quod ubi vina dominantur Venus, non regnat.

"Gir. Cam. Top. Hib.

De Clericis et Monasticis."

* I have observed that the praise of the Villare monks' sobriety is rare, if not unique; and a passage from the writings of their founder, confirms this opinion. St. Bernard has a passage in strong rebuke of monastic excess carried to such a height, that in some monasteries three or four kinds of wine would, at one dinner, be "*smelled to rather than tasted, in order to select the strongest*;" in others, at their great festivals, it was the habit to "*drink wine, mingled with honey, sprinkled over with grains of perfume*." "We all of us," he says, "the very instant we become monks, have weak stomachs! but neglect the necessary counsel of the Apostle, respecting the case of wine, the word '*little*,' which he introduces, being, I know not why, left out."—*Bernardi Abbatis ad Clericos de Conversione*, c. xx.

Would I might say such rigid fasts
Never gave place to rich repasts,
Would I might call them true, as trying,
As pure, as seemingly denying.
But of those tonsured thousands one
Could scarce be found when night drew on,
Who did not seek in huge potations
To recompense his past privations,
And drain'd the wine cup to repay
The prayers and fasts performed by day,
Thus meting time in equal measure,
One half to penance, one to pleasure,
In day time doing works of light,
To deeds of darkness yielding night,
It may be deemed a marvel, plain
That Venus shared not Bachus' reign.

the construction of Giraldus is somewhat ambiguous, as to whether he concludes with an insinuated charge of incontinence, as well as intemperance. I have given the construction which is both most charitable, and most accordant with the confessed fact, that among those "vices akin to virtues," chargeable on the poor Irish of the present day, general incontinence is not to be reckoned.

APPENDIX II.

"IF IT SHOULD PLEASE THE KING TO HAVE ANY REMORSE."

(*Introductory Remarks*, p. xix.)

THE case of "*Catesby Nunnery*," to which the remarkable expression in the text applies, is stated in the Report from the Royal Commissioners of Northamptonshire, to the "Chancellour of Augmentacions," thus:—

"The House of Catesby we founde in very perfett order, the Piores, a sure, wyse, discrete, and very religious woman, with ix. nunnys under her obedyencye, as relygious and devoute, and with as goode obedyencye as we have in tyme past seen, or belyke shall see.

"The seid howse standyth in such a quarter, much to the releff of the Kyngis people—and his grace's poore subjects ther lykewyse mooche releived—as by the report of divers worshypfulles nere thereunto, adjoining, as of alle other yt ys unto us openlie declared. Wherefore yf yt shulde please the Kyngis Highness to have eny remorse, that eny such relygeous house shall stand, we thinke his grace cannot appoynt eny hous, more mete to showe his most gracious charitie and pitey one, than one the said Hous of Catesby. Further you shalle understande, that as to her bounden dewtye, towards the Kyngis Highness, *in theis his affayres*—as also for discrete enterteynment of us, his Commissioners, and our company—we have not founde, nor belyke shall finde any suche of more discretion; and lese paradventure ther maye be labourie mayde to her detryment and othyr undoyng—before knowleg shoulde come to His Highness, and to yow from us, it may pleas you to signify unto his Highnesse the effect of theis our lettres, to the entent his grace may staie the graunte thereof, till such tyme as we may ascertyn you of our fulle certyficat and compertes in that behalf accordinge.—From Catesby, the xij. day of the present moneth off May—from the Kingis Commissioners, at your commandment."

This unmeasured and unusual commendation being duly reported to the "Kinges Highness," *displeased* him—whether it was the expression implying that "*remorse*" might fix its gnawing fangs on his mind, or that the excessive laudation of the Catesby establishment awakened in his jealous nature some suspicion of undue influence, it appears that it came round to one of the Northampton Commissioners, from a servant of his, how the King had let fall a surmise "*it was like they had received rewards which caused them to write as they did.*" George Gyffard, the Commissioner in question, nevertheless, evinced either great audacity, or a truly honest and noble boldness, when he ventured in the face of Royal suspicion and displeasure, not only to justify the former report but even to repeat the offence, in a letter to Cromwell, wherein he writes "in favour of the Monastic House of Wolstrobe," in this manner:—

"The Governore is a verie good husbände for the Hous, and well beloved of alle the enhabitans thereunto adjoining—a right honest man, having viii. religious persons, beyng prestes of right good conversation and lyving religiously, having such qualities of vertu, as we have not found the lyke in no place—for there is not oon religious person thear, but that the can and dothe use eyther inbrothering—wryting bookes with verye fayre haund—makying ther own garnements—karvyng—payntyng—or graffyng.* The House without any sclandre or evyll fame—and stands in a wast ground, verie solitarie, kepyng such hospitalitie, that excepte bye synguler goode provision itt couldent be mayntayned with halfe as muche landes more as they may spende, suche a nombre of the poore inhabitans nigh thereunto dayly releved, that we have not sene the like, havynge no more landes than they have. God be evyn my judge as I do wright unto you the trothe—and non other wyse to my knowlege—which verie petie aloon causeth me to wright. The premysses whereof considered in most humble wise, I beseach you to be a meane unto the Kingis Majestie for the standinge of the said Woolstrobe."

This is the letter, seemingly, of a man made bold by conviction, and constrained by cogent evidences of piety and usefulness to cross a sovereign will, without regard to consequences. We cannot well conceive a Religious House of the day fulfilling

* Engraving.

the ends of its institution more thoroughly than Woolstrobe appears to have done, but it availed not to avert its earthly destruction in the general judgment provoked by the contrasted state of other Religious Houses; let us hope that it availed the inmates, with Him, who charges his servants not to be found "eating and drinking with the drunken" when he cometh "at an hour when they are not aware."

APPENDIX III.

"HOW THE SUPPLICATION OF BEGGARS CAME TO THE KINGE'S DESKE."

(*Introductory Remarks*, p. xxi.)

SOME doubt exists as to how this popular and stinging Pasquil reached the king's hands; Fox who has handed it down to us entire in his "Martyrologie" gives two accounts, of which Mr. Froude adopts one "*although(?)* it rests on Fox's authority, as having *internal* marks of authenticity."

According to one version of the affair, Master Symon Fyshe, the author, "A Gentleman of Gray's Inne," having incurred Wolsey's displeasure by taking a *part* in some masque* or interlude played at "his inne," which "touched the

* Foxe does not specify what the masque was which first rendered "Maister Fyshe" obnoxious to the Cardinal; he only mentions one "M. Roo, a gentleman of the same inne, as the author." From other sources, however, we learne that in the year 1527, Wolsey took cognizance of a "Chrismas interlude," whereof the argumente ran as follows:—"Lord Governauce, being ruled by Lady Dissipation and Lady Negligence, through their *mis-rule* it came to passe, that Lady Public-weale, the lawful consort of Governauce, was put from him; this causeth '*Rumor Populi*' to rise up, and, '*vi et armis*,' to expell Negligence, and restore Public-weale to her castle again."

Even without anything else to identify them than concurrence of time and internal evidence, "I assume this to be the very piece in which Fyshe took some one parte so full of 'parlous danger'—that none else, not even "bully Bottom" himself, would venture on it, because of its "touching the Cardinal." Whether this part were "Lord Governauce," at whom all was aimed, or more likely that "*Rumor Populi*," to whom it would fall to say bold or biting truths, so it happened that the same night in which it was played, "with great applause," the daring actor was forced to "voyd his house, and flee over seas to Tindal," while the luckless author was "laid by the heels, and committed to the Fleet Prison."

Cardinal," "fled over the seas to Tindall." This happened about the year 1527. Thus banished, Symon Fyshe, composed this book, and, as Fox supposed, sent it, in 1528, to "The Lady Anne Bulleine, who then laye not far from the Court." Her brother, seeing it in her handes, took, read, and returned it to her againe, "willing her earnestlie to give it to the King, which thing she so did." The story goes on to state, that when the King had the book in hand three or four days, notice was given to Fyshe's wife, who, thereon, was emboldened to "make sute to his Majesty for the safe returne of her husbände," which being granted, he was brought privily to the King, who came and with loving countenance embraced him (?), "and, after long talke of three or four hours," dismissed him "with a signet token to Sir Thomas More (Wolsey being meanwhile deposed), not to be so hardy, or to worke him any harme." This (to Foxe) "seemeth to be about the yeare of our Lord 1530;" but the whole story lacks *probability*, especially as compared with the "other note touching the same matter," adopted by Froude, as follows:—

"Master Edmund Moddis (the King's footman) being with the King in talk of religion, and of the *newe bookes that were come from beyond the seas*, said, that if it might please his Grace to pardon him, and such as he would bring to his Grace, *he shoud see such a booke as was marvell to heare of*. The King demanded what they were? He sayd, 'Two of your merchauntes, *George Elyot* and *George Robinson*.' The King appointed a time to speak with them. When they were before his presence in a privy closet, he demanded what they had to say or to show him. One of them said, there was a booke came to their hands which they had there to shew his Grace. When he saw it, he demanded, 'If any of them could read it?' 'Yea,' said *George Elyot*, 'if it please your Grace to hear it.' '*I thought so*,' said the King, '*for if need were thou canst say it without booke*.'

"The whole booke being read out, *the Kinge made a long pause*! and then sayd, 'If a man should pull down an old stone wall, and begin at the lower part, the upper part thereof might chance to fall upon his head.' And then he tooke the booke and put it into his deske, and commanded them, upon their allegiance, that they should not telle to any man that he had seen the booke."

This whole transaction, supposing it to have happened as related, (including *the King's talk with his footman of religion*) is full of significance, and, as Mr. Froude shrewdly observes, it evinces that "*the facts of the age were telling upon Henry's understanding.*" It is interesting to reflect how much of the destinies of England may have hung in the balance during that *long pause!* terminated by the "royal oracular truism." In that interval Henry may well be supposed to have held debate with himself thus—"Shall I grapple at once with this home and homely evil, or shall I begin with its alien and dangerous head? Whether shall I try conclusions with the usurping power, which is oppressing crown and cottage, myself and subjects alike, upon a *trifling* as upon a *serious* matter?" The question was—Whether was battle to be done for the King's Annates,* or for the Beggars' Alms-dish? It may with some confidence be said that, in selecting the former for his ground of quarrel, Henry decided the success of the English Reformation. There have been, at various periods, attempts not few though futile, at the internal reform and amendment of other national churches; all, sooner or later, proved ineffective, because they began either *at the bottom* or *midway in the old wall*, leaving the Papal *top* to topple over and crush the Reformers, sooner or later. France was once elated in her "*Gallican liberties*;" Austria once raised her head high in the enjoyment of her "*Josephean*" and *Leopoldine* Reforms, but she left the link which bound her to the Tiara unsevered, and, within a century, the voice of the Gallican liberties is choked by Ultramontanism, and Austrian freedom lies crushed and captive in the meshes of a *new concordat!* as stringent as if it had been framed by Hildebrand himself. That England is yet untrammelled, she owes to the decision which, in throwing down her prison wall, determined that the work should begin at *top* and not at *bottom*.

It is right here to say, that the interpretation I have here given to King Henry's oracular saying does not seem to accord with that put upon it by Mr. Southey, although he is not very clear in expressing what he does understand from it. His remark is—

* "*Annates.*" Ecclesiasticarum possessionum primitiæ quas clerus Romanus sumo Pontifici pendet, Anglicanus Regi."—SPELMAN *Glos.* in verb.:—Some question exists as to the date of the origin of this Papal *Imposition*, but none can be entertained that this pithy definition declares the essence of the question at issue between the Royalty of England and the Papacy.

“Henry had too much sagacity not to perceive the consequences which such a book was likely to produce, and he said, after perusing it, ‘If a man should pull down an old stone wall and begin at the bottom, the upper part thereof might chance to fall upon his head.’ But he saw also that it tended to serve his immediate purpose.”—*Southey's Colloques with Sir Thomas More*, vol. i. p. 87-8.

Symon Fyshe cannot be said to have survived to witness the effects of the explosion of his own petard. He died of the plague in a half year after his return from banishment, but a courageous wife survived him to marry to her second husband, another testifier for the truth in the person of Master James Bainham, second son of a worshipful knight of Gloucestershire, whose “whipping at the Chancellor’s (Sir Thomas More’s) tree of troth” at Chelsea, and his after-questioning and ultimate burning, are told at large by Foxe, under date of 26th April, 1532.

APPENDIX IV.

RICHARD LAYTON'S REPORT ON THE CASE OF LANGDON ABBEY.

(Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. p. 127.)

(Introductory Remarks, p. xxiv.)

" TO THE LORD CROMWELL,

" Please your goodness to understand that on Friday the xxi. October, I rode back with speede to take an inventorie of Fowlston, and thens I went to Langdon, whereas, immediately descendinge from my hors, I sent Bartlett your servant, with alle my servants to circumcept the Abbey, and surely to keep alle back doores and startyng hoiles, and myself went alone to the Abbot, laying watch upon the fielde and woode, it being like a coney-cliffe full of starting hoille. A good space knocking at the Abbot's doore '*nec vox nec sensus apparuit*,' saving the Abbot's littel dogge, that with hys doore fast lokked, bayed and barked. I found a short polaxe standing behind the doore, and with yt I dashed the Abbey doore in pieces, '*ictu oculi*'—and setting one of my menne to keepe the doore, about house I goe with the polaxe in my hande '*ne forte*'—for the Abbot is a dangerous desperate knave, and a harde—but for a conclusion, his hore *alias* his gentilwoman bestyrrede hir stumps towards his starting hoil, and then Bartlett watching the pursuit tooke the damoisel, and after I had examyned hir I sent her to Dover, ther to the Maior to set her in the cage for viii daies, and I broghte holy Father Abbot to Canterbie, and hope in Christ solemnly I will levye him in prison—in this sudden doinge of purpose to visit the hous and to serche, your servante John Anthonie, and his menne, marvelled what felow I was—and so dide the reste of the Abbey, for I was unknowyn ther of al menne—at last I founde hir apparel in the Abbot's coffer—to tell you alle this comedy (but for the Abbot a tragedie) hit were long, now it shall appear to gen-

tlemente of this County, and others the Commons, that we shall not deprive or visit but on substantial growndes—surely I suppose God himself put it in my mynde thus suddenly to make a serch at the beginning, because no chanon appeared in my syght—I supposed to have found a hore or husive hyd in the Abbots chamber—the reste of all this knaverie I shall defer till my visite to you, which shall (be) with as much speede as I can possible, doing my assured diligens in the rest—this morning I ride towards the Arch-bishop and visite hym, now when I have visited hys see—this night I will be at Feversham Abbey—this is to advertise your mastershippe—Scribulled this Satterdaie, and written with the hastie hande of your assurede servant,

“RICHARD LAYTON. *Preste.*”

“These things were done as reported on the 22nd of October, and on the 13th of November following, ‘*William Dyer, Abbot of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin and St. Thomas the Martyr at Langdon in Kent,*’ led the way as the first of ‘the Religious’ of England in surrendering his house and revenues to the King. The preamble of this surrender assigns as cause for the act, that the revenues of the house were ‘diminished, deteriorated, and burdened with debt’ (*deteriorata, diminuta, ingentique ære alieno obruta oppressa et gravata*), but not a word of the real moving cause, namely, ‘*the gentilwoman set in the cage at Dover!*’ Old Fuller, in his quaint way, says, ‘as school-boys hope to escape with fewer stripes for being the first in untying their points, those convents promised to themselves the kindest usage, that were forwardest in their resignations, *though all on the matter fared alike.*’”

THE ABBOT OF MAIDEN BRADLEY.*

(*Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. p. 249.*)

THE case of the Abbot of Langdon, is one of plain impurity, calling for chastisement; that of the Abbot of Maiden Bradley presents a picture of mixed superstition and

* Maiden Bradley, in Wiltshire, a Convent of Canons Regular, dedicated by Manasses Basset. Temp. Hen. II. valor £197 18s. 8d. The original foundation of the House was an Hospital for “leprous women”—the state in which the visitors found it, and the application of its revenues verifies the assertion of Simon Fyshe’s “supplication” that let charity found an hospital for what purpose soever, “*the fat of the foundation ever hung to the Prestis Bearde.*”——

sinfulness melancholy to contemplate, and asking the reader, in the words of one of old Fuller's invitations, to "*read, blush, and sigh!*"

"LAYTON TO CROMWELL,

"Please it your mastershippe to understande, that yester-night late, we came from Glassyburie, to Bristowe to St. Augustines—whereas we begin thys mornynge, intending this daye to dispatche bowthe this howse here, being but xii Chanoines, as also the *Gawntes* whereas be but iiij or v. By this bringar my servaunte I send you reliques—first two flowers wrapped in whyte and black sarcenet that on Chrustmasse-day-even, '*hora ipsâ quâ Christus natus fuerat,*' will springe and, burgen and beare blossoms '*quod expertum est,*' saith the Prior of Maiden Bradley! You shall also receive a bagge of reliquis, whereas you shall se strange things as shalle appere by the scripture,*—as Gode's cote!—our Lady's smoke!!—parte of Godde's Supper '*in Cæna Domini,*'—'*Pars petri super qua natus est Jesus in Bethlehem,*' (belyke there is in Bethlehem plentie of stones, and so a quarrie, and maketh ther mangers of stone) the scripture of everie thinge shall declare you—and *all these of Maiden Bradley!*—where is an holy Father Prior, and hath but six children, and but one daughter married yet of the goodes of the monasterie, trysting shortlie to marrie the rest—his sonnes be talle men, waiting upon him, and he thanks God and never medlett with marrytte women, but alle with maidenens the fairest coulde be gottyn and alwaies marryed them right welle. The Pope, considering his fragilitie, gave him licens to kep a hore, and hath good writing, '*sub plumbo,*' to discharge his consciens, and to choys Mr. Underhyll to be his ghostlye fadir, and he to chryve (*shrive*) him,† *plena remissione.*

"I send you also Our Lady's girdell of Bruton, red silke, which is a solemn relique, sent to women travelynge, which shall not miscarrie *in partu.* I send you also Mary Magdelene's girdell, and it is wrapt and covered with white, sent alsoe with gret reverence to women travellynge, which girdell Matilda the Empresse,

* This means, I think, not a reference to God's Scripture, but to a written inventory sent with the parcel.

† I perceive that the editor of the "Suppression of Monasteries," p. 58, reads this sentence of the original MS. differently, but I give it, as I have it on notes taken long before I saw that volume. He reads, "And he to gyve him, *plenam remissionem, &c.*" There is no difference of sense.

founder of Ferley, gave unto them, as saith the Holy Fader of Ferley. I have crosses of silver and gold, which I sende you not now, because I have mo(re); yt shalle be delivered to me this nyght by the Prior of Mayden Bradley himself. tomorrowe earlie in the morninge I shall bring yow the reste when I have received all, and, perchaunce, I shall fynde somethynge here. In case yowe depart this day, it may please you to sende me word, by this bringer my servante, which waye I shall repair after yowe.

“ Wiltham, the Charter-house, hath professed and done all thinges according, as I shall declare you at large to-morrow earlye. At Bristow and Glasenburie there is nothyng notable—the brethren be so strikt kepped that they cannot offend—but fain they would if they might, as they confesse, and so the faute is not in them.

“ From Saincte Austine’s Without, Bristowe, this St. Bartilmew’s day, at iii. of the cloke in the mornyng, by the speedy of hand of your most assured poore preste,

“ RICHARD LAYTON.”

THE TAPER OF CARDIGAN.

(*Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. p. 117.*)

The examination and report in this case appear to have been made by *William Barlow, Bishop of the See of St. David’s*, who would seem to have gone heartily into the reformation of superstition, even in Henry’s time, and who, having been consecrated to St. Asaph, 1535, and translated to St. David’s, A.D. 1536, was again translated to Bath and Wells, A.D. 1549; deprived by Mary; survived the Marian Persecution, to take part in the consecration of Archbishop Parker; and ultimately died Bishop of Chichester, A.D. 1570, after an Episcopate of thirty-five years.

“ Sithence” I abated the great abuse at Haverford West, I chanced upon a

* The mixture of candour and unfairness in this passage is remarkable, and seems rather to make for the honesty of Layton’s Reports. Had he been sent to report on the monasteries, as some say, with a greedy eye to their revenues, without any regard to truth or equity, he would, in all likelihood, have leaned hard on Glastonbury, the wealthiest endowment in England; but he rather praises the “*strikt keeping*” of the inmates there; while, on the other hand, his unwarrantable inuendo that those in whom he found no wrong doing would “offend if they could,” has in it nothing of the charity which either believeth or hopeth good of a brother.

Taper of much greater credit, and of more shameful detestacyon, called Our Lady's Taper of Cardigan, which I have sente hither to your Lordship with convenyent instructions of that develysh delusion; furthermore, where I admonished the Canons of St. David's, according to the King's instructions, in no wise to sette forthe feigned reliques for to allure the people to superstition, neither to advance the vayne observance of unnecessary holydaies."

The Examinacion of Thomas Horne, Prior of Cardigan, Donative of the late Monastery of Chertsey, touching the pretended Taper of our Lady ther—

Imprimis,—The said Prior saith that he hath been prior there for the space of five years; that he never sawe the Taper of our Lady within but at the under neder end, when it appeared *woode* to his judgement.

Item,—That he esteemed the same to be a holy relique, to his judgement, according to the fame of the countrie, untill the time that he sawe it opened, and then he confesseth himself to have been deceived therein.

Item,—That the image now situate in the Church of Cardigan, which is used for a grete pilgrimge to the present daie, was found standing on the River of Tyve, which is an arm of the sea, and *hir Sonne upon hir lappe*, and the same taper burning in hir honde.

Item,—That the same image was carried thens to Christ Church in Cardigan, and the said image would not tarry there, but was found three or foure times in the place where now is builded the Churche of Our Ladye, and thes taper burninge in her honde, which continued stille burninge the space of nine yeares without wastinge, untill the tyme that *one forswore himself thereon*, and then it extinguished, and never burned after.

Item,—That since the ceasing of burning of sayd taper, it was enclosed and taken for a grete relique, and so worshipped and kissed of pelgrims, and used of menne to sweare by in difficil and harde matters, whereof the advantage amounted to great summes of money in times past, payinge yearlie of the same xx. nobles as a pencion to the Abbot of Chersey.

The corollary to this examination is the confession of the aged vicar of "Our Lady's Church" at Cardigan, that he had, for xxi. years, been ministering to the delusion of "causinge to be worshipped a pece of old rotten tymber, putting the people to belyve the same to be a holy relque, and a taper that burned without consuminge or wast."

Syr Morgan Meredith, Vicar of Our Lady's Church.

Imprimis,—He sayeth he hath been vicar there xxi. yeares.

Item,—"Pryor Johan Trodsam had told hyme, that because the people tooke the waxe awaie, he put the tree beneath, that the people should not diminish the substance of the taper, otherwys he assenteth and agreeth in alle thinges with the pryor.

RICHARD BEERLY, THE MONK OF PERSHORE, HIS BYL OR PETICION TO THE LORD CROMWELL TO BE DISMISSED.*

(*Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. 161.*)

This appears to have been one of the many monks of whom Fuller speaks, "formerly lazy in, now weary of, their present profession." Making all allowance for the freaks of orthography and orthoepy in those days, the letter of Dan Richard Beerly must be pronounced that of a most illiterate monk; and whether he was one of those prevailed on by the private persuasions of the visitors to impeach the general conduct of his convent, must be left to the judgment of the reader. The kako-graphy of the original is preserved to the letter:—

"TO Y^E LORD CROMWELL,—Most reverend Lord yn God, second person yn thys rem (realm) of Englonde, yndued w^t all grace and goodness, y submet myselfe unto y^r grace and goodness, desyringe yo^u myckely to be good and gracyous Lord unto me synful and poore creatur, my lowly and myck†

* Pershore, in Worcestershire, Monastery of Black Monkes, founded by Egilward, Earl of Dorset, temp. K. Edgar, valor. £666 13s.

† Lowly and Meek.

scribbling* unto yo^r nobill grace at thys tyme ys grugging yn my conchons, that the relygyon whyche we do obser and keype ys no rull of Sentt. Benett nor yt no comandymment of God, nor of no senth but lyzth and foulyse serymonys,† mayd su yn old tyme and sum in o^r tyme by lyzth and ondyscrytt faders wych have done thir dutys and fulfyllyd their own seremonys and lett the preceps and comadymments of God go, and so have y dō this syx yeare, which doth now greve my conchons sore, thatt y have byen a dyssemblar so long tyme, the whych relygyon, say Sent Jamys, ys yn vayne, and bryngeth forthe noe good frutte, better owtt then yn the relygyon, except yt were the true relygyon of Chryst; also we do i nothyng scrych for the doctryn of Chryst, but all fowloye o^r owne sensyaly‡ and pleser; and thys relygyon, as y suppose, ys all yn vayne glory, and nothyng worthye to be except§ before God nor men. Also,

most gracyus Lord, ther ys a secrett thyng yn my conchons whyche doth move me to goo owte of th relygyon, and yf yt were never so pefett, whych noe mā maye knowe but my gostly fader, yⁿ which y supposs yf a man mothe judge yn other young persons as yn meselfe, for Chryst say, ‘NOLITE JUDICARE ET NON JUDICABIMINI,’ therefor, y will guge mynowne conchons first, the whych fautt he shall knowe of me heyraft^r more largelyrly, and many othyr fowl vycys|| don amonkst relygus¶ men, not relygyus men as y thynk they owtt not to be cald, but dyssymbllars w^t God. Now, most gracyous Lord, and most worthyst vycytar** that ev^r came amonkst us, help me out of thys vayne relygyon, and macke me yo^r servaunte-handemayd and beydman, and save my sowlle whych shold be loste yf ye helpe it not, the whych you may save w^t an words peeking, and mack mee whych am now nawtt†† to cā unto grace and goodness; now I will ynstrux‡‡ yo^r Grace seewhatt of relygyus men, and howy the Kynge’s grace comandymment ys keyp yn puttyng forth of bookes, the Beyshatt§§ of Roms userpt power, monckes drynke an bowl aft^r collacyon tell ten or xij. of the

* Scribbling.

† Lies and foolish ceremonies.

‡ Sensuality.

§ Accepted.

|| Vices.

¶ Religious.

** Visitor.

†† Nought.

‡‡ Instruct.

§§ Bishop of Rome’s.

clock, and cā to mattens as dronck as myss, and summe at cards sue att dyys,* and att tabulls, some cū to mattens begynnyng at the mydst, and sume when yt ys almost done, and wold not cum ther so only for boddelly punnyshment, nothing for God's sayck, w^t many other vycys the use wyche y have no lesert now to expresse; also abbotts, monks, prest don lyttyl or nothyng to putt owtt of books the Besschatt of romes name, for y myselfe do know yn dyvs books wher ys name and his usurpt power upon us ys. No mor unto y^r nobul Grace at thys tyme, but Jesu p^rserve yo^u to pleser. Amen.

“Yo^r comysary comandyd me to wrytt my mynd unto yo^r nobul Grace, by my owthe y toyk of hy yn o^r chapt^r hows.

Be me gor beydūā dan Rye heerly
now work yn the monastery of pershor.

to my nobull and gracyus lord
bycrtar, yn the kyukges cortt be
thys byl delyberyd yn hast.

APPENDIX V.

THE QUESTION BETWEEN THE KING AND THE MONKS.

(*Introductory Remarks*, p. xxiv.)

THAT this question—“The Papal Supremacy”—was *the* turning point of *King Henry's* Reformation (speaking of that Reformation as distinct from the ultimate correction and cleansing out of doctrinal error) can, I think, scarce be doubtful to any one who examines authorities. Shortly after the episode of Elizabeth Barton, the “Maid of Kent,” in the *fore front* of whose lying visions it was “bid to her” to “tell the Kinge that he tak none of the Pope's right nor patrymony from him (Cotton

* Dice.

† Leisure.

MSS. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 75). Henry sent "Lee, Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, and Thomas Bedyll, an active suppressor of monasteries, to examine the monks of Richmond and Greenwich, touching their accordance to certain articles submitted to them for acceptance."

These Commissioners found the monks of both places, being powerful and leading houses of their Order, "in oone mynde of contradiction and dissent from the sayd articles, but *specially agaynst this Article* :—"

' *Quod Episcopus Romanus nihilo majoris neque auctoritatis aut jurisdictionis habendus sit quam ceteri quivis Episcopi, in Anglia vel alibi gentium in sua quisque Diocesi ;*'

and the cause for their dissent, as they sayde, was by reason that that article was clerely agynst their profession, and the rules of Sayncte Francis."—(*Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 10.*)

It would be too long to copy here the clear and demonstrative arguments by which the Commissioners showed that the rule of Sancte Francis and his brethren, "dwelling in Italye undre the obedience of the Bishoppe of Rome, were not wordes mente for ffriers of Englonde," nor the plain reasons the Commissioners gave for putting aside the rule as "noe original rule of St. Frauncies," but "fforged and plaunted in by some ambitious ffriar of that Ordre." We refer for these to the original, or to that instructive volume of the Camden Society publications, relating to "The Suppression of Monasteries;" the only object here being to assert that "The Papal Supremacy" formed *the question* upon which issue was taken at the time between "The Defender of the Faith," and his subjects of "The Religious Orders."

APPENDIX VI.

"THE SUPPLICATION OF BEGGARS."

(Introductory Remarks, p. xxxvi.)

"THE LIBELL OR BOOKE, *strewne and scattered about the streets of London, and even at the procession in Westminster, on Candlemas Day before the King,*" was a composition neither framed nor flung in sport, but a sharp deadly missile feathered with a popular allegory, and aimed at that Ecclesiastical System which it charged with having "gotten in haunde more than one thirde of the Kinges Realme," and to have grown from a "mere number of monkes, canons, friars, pardners, and sumners," into a *Kingdome!* (that *imperum in imperio*," which Rome is for ever trying to establish among and over the nations of the earth.) It was in vain that Sir Thomas More "missed his decorum in foully railing at Symon Fyshe's mode of putting his case as "grosely exaggerate"* or "rascal mistatement;" had the "libel" no more in it than lies and exaggerations, it would soon have been trodden into dust beneath the feet of the passing procession, but it was because it merely "*voiced*" the national sense of oppression under the incubus lying heavy upon its energies, that it rose from the

* Fuller takes exception to Symon Fyshe's "*Geometry, Arithmetic, and Chronology*," with more temper and moderation, and, therefore, with more effect than angry More, yet he leaves quite enough to make out the case of the Beggars against the monks. He says:—

For *Geometry*.—"He faileth not much in proportion, when he affirmeth that they had got into their hands the *third part of all the realm!*"

For *Arithmetic*.—"But when he auditeth their revenues, besides their lands," as arising out of the parishes of England, he highly over-rateth them at 52,000, their number not completing 10,000—yea, adding all conventual and chapels of ease, it would not make up that number. But, indeed, if we defalk *one third* of "four hundred and thirty thousand, three hundred, thirty, and three pounds, their computed gains from parishes, still vast was the remainder of friar's revenues.

As to *Chronology*, whereas the Beggars allege that 400 years ago *the friars had not one penny of that money*, Fuller demurreth thereto, asserting that "some *Benedictine* endowments had accrued before the Conquest;" he ends all with one of *his own* quaintnesses, "but it is given to beggars sometimes to *hyperbolize!* to make their case more pitiful."

crowd to the Court, from the *canaille* to the *Courtier*, and ultimately reached the King's hand, ear, and understanding.

Fyshe's mode of putting his case is ingenious. Assuming the tone of the King's daily bedesmen "the beggars," "those wretched hideous monstres," who, under monkery, had grown into an Estate of the Realm, and whom it was the boast and business of the religious to relieve. "On behalf of these foule, unhappy sorte of lepers, and other sore people, the needy, impotent, blinde, lame, and sicke, that live only by alms," he makes his plaint 'that there is "craftily crepte and growne into this poor realme" "*another sorte of beggars*," "not impotent, but strong, puissant, and counterfeit holy, idle beggars and vagabonds," "who have begged so importunately that they have gotten into haunde more than *the third part* of the Realm—the goodliest lordships, manours, landes, and territories are theirs." After a long list of exactions and modes of extortion, the plaint goes on thus:—"these they will have, or els procure him that will not give to them to be taken for an *Hereticke*!" "What tyrant ever oppressed like this cruel and *vengible* generation?" "What subjects shall be able to venge their prince, that be thus yearly poll'd? What good christian people can be able to succour us poor lepers, blind, sore, and lame, that be thus oppressed?" The supplication then proceeds with its statistics to a computation ending in the conclusion that the whole gains, which "this sorte of locusts" sucked to themselves "drew nigh to *the half* of the whole substance of the Realme," "and then cometh the *ominous* calculation of the proportion between, "these few unprofitable ones, thus unwholesomely aggrandized," as compared with the toiling residue of the industrious community.

"now let us compare the number of this unkinde idel sorte, unto the number of the lay-people, and we shall see whether it be indifferently shifted or not, that they should have *half*—Compare them to the number of men, so, are they not the hundreth person; compare them to men, women, and children, so, are they not the four hundreth person in number? One part therefor into four hundred parts divided, were too much for them except they did labour. What an unequal burden is it that they have half with the multitude, and are not the four hundreth person of their number."

"Your Noble Progenitors," urges the Beggar Oratore, "seeing their crowne and dignity run to ruine, and thus craftily translated into the handes of this mischievous generation, meade diverse statutes for reformation thereof, among which the Statute of MORTMAIN was one—but what availed it—for to them is given daily of your Kingdom, *"and that is once given them never cometh from them againe,"* *"such laws have they that none of them may either give or sell anything."*

The beggars go on to urge that "the founding of many hospitals for their relief availeth nothing, nay, truly"—*"the more the worse—for ever the fat of the whole foundation hangeth on the Prestes' beardes,"* so that the King's Majesty is bluntly warned that "if his grace would build his poor sicke and sore bedesmen a sure hospitalle, that never shall faile, *he must take from them alle!*" "set," continues the daring Remonstrant, "these sturdy loubies abroad on the world, to get them wives of their own,"—"to get their living with their labour in the sweat of their faces, according to the Commandment of God (Genesis the First,) to give other idel people by their example, occasion to go to labour."

There is a true stirring eloquence in the final appeal and prediction, with which this remarkable document closes—after urging that if needs be, the King should "ty these holy idel theeves to the carts, to be whipped naked about every Market Town, till they fall to labour"—it proceeds thus:—

"then shall our monstrous sorte—as bawdes, whores, theeves, and idel people decrease—then shall these great yearly exactions cease—then shall your sword, power, crown, dignity, and obedience not be translated from you—then shall yu have fulle obedience of your people—then shall the idel be sette to worke—then shall matrimony be much better kept—then shall the generation of your people be increased—then shall your Commons increase in riches—then shall the gospel be preched—then shall none beg our alms from us—then shall we have enough, and more than shall suffice us—which shall be the best hospital that ever was founded for us—then shall we daily praie to God for your Most Noble Estate long to endure."

It may be affirmed that, with the unavoidable vagueness of calculations reaching into a dim future, the germs of most of the social and moral results of England's National Reformation are stated in this remarkable peroration.

APPENDIX VII.

"THE MONTALEMBERT PARALLEL"—*Continued.*

(Introductory Remarks, p. xxxviii.)

IT suits Le Compte de Montalembert's object to pause in his parallel between the contrasted Kingdoms of England and Spain, at the era of Pitt and Godoy, but there is no reason why we should not adopt his idea, and continue the comparison to the present moment, through the eventful half century which has since elapsed, in which, whether viewed morally, socially, or politically, the contrast has not been less striking than at former periods; we take up his parable, and say:—

Fifty years more are passed, and England and Spain—where are they?

The Spain of Godoy, become the Spain of the Buonapartes, proved the bait which lured the greatest of them to his downfall, and was the carcase over which the Eagles of France and the Lion of England fought out their battle of rivalry and strife for control of the destinies of Europe, until the latter had forced the former with "shattered wing and plumage rent," to flutter behind the Pyrenees again. Then was Spain set on her feet, and bidden to stand up and take her place once more among the nations, in whatever independence she could vindicate for herself; and her "Royal Prisoner of Vallançay" was set free to work his Royal pleasure over, and with his disenthralled subjects—alas, that will and pleasure seems to have been to live "embroidering petticoats for the Virgin," and to die bequeathing to his subjects "the party names of "Carlist and Christino," and a new "war of the succession," which was to issue in delivering over his Kingdom and people to the *intriguante* Christiana, and her sordid Jew paramour Munoz; to the "*Marriages Espagnols*" of Louis Philippe's shallow craft; and finally to that Regime concerning

which decency holds its peace perforce, and under which national indifference, or national disgust, receives the pledge of its continuance to future generations, with an apathy and silence sadly unlike what might be expected from the once chivalrous loyalty of the Spaniard. In her foreign relations, Spain weighs for about as much (or as little) as San-Marino; in her internal regulations, unstable as water, veering between 'Moderado and Absoluto' and making no way under either direction, the word seems pointed against her, "thou shalt not excel," while in her religious position she seems retrograding even into blinder and blacker submission to the behests of that *Catholicism* which, in "granting" her a new "Concordat," binds her to such stringency of illiberality, that to Protestant England, who stood between her and political extinction, who helped her with blood and treasure to expel the invader; to this rescuing friend, *thankful!* Spain cannot afford the poor privilege of burying its dead with the decent offices of religion. Such has been the retrograde progress of this once great nation, in respect and influence abroad, in peace and prosperity at home, in social advancement, in moral purity, in liberality, or tolerance free of thought or action.

How stands the case with England at the close of the same period?

The day in which she ended a successful war, which might well have left a greater nation nerveless and exhausted, saw her start in a fresh career of commercial activity, in which she has been running with accelerated speed ever since. The *millions* of "dead weight debt" about her neck, instead of weighing down, would seem to have but steadied her in her course; the reaction of peace—the troubles and ferments inevitable to a transition state both of principles and their practical application—the opening of the portals of the Constitution to her Romanist subjects—the mighty conflicts of a Reform Bill, which was, in effect, a revolution—her slave emancipation—her corn-law abolition—her currency bills—each in itself an event to shake institutions and domestic relations to their very base, have all left England making *steady way* in her course of national prosperity. Within the same period more than one continental convulsion has crumbled the arrangements of the "general peace" in pieces, while within British rule, her Canada revolts—Chartist demonstrations—Irish insurrections—Caffre warfare—even the mutiny of *a continent* in India—have tested, but not shaken the

basis of England's power; and all these storms would seem to have blown over the nation only to prove the difference between naturally grown and artificially forced greatness. Dynasties came, went, and came again elsewhere, while the English succession has proceeded as naturally as the seasons; and of all the *indicia* of the stable and ordered character of England's institutions, we should probably select, as the most striking, the quiet and graceful ease with which the sceptre of an empire, on which the sun never sets, passed into the grasp of a Girl-Queen, and has been since borne in her woman-hand, the emblem of a sovereignty as effectual as it has been easy to obey it.

Here we pause in our parallel, just at the point which most tempts us to pursue it. We might allow the "Fourth of the Georges," and the "Seventh of the Ferdinands," to "pair off" together, with a remark, that if the one conferred no benefit on his people, the other did his free-minded subjects no injury. We might exult in weighing our frank-hearted "Sailor King" against his worthless contemporary "Spanish Regent," but we will not do irreverence to the decorous virtue, to the pattern propriety, to the natural, simple, *home* habits which characterise the court and family of our ruling sovereign, by even a contrast with those of "her sister of Spain." As *individuals* they started in their race nearly together, and are running it towards a goal where the decision rests with "their own Master," "the only Ruler of princes;" but as Sovereigns, as embodiments and representatives of their respective kingdoms, and of the systems, social, political, domestic, moral, and religious, which they administer, public opinion can, and doubtless does, form a daily judgment, to which we leave the Majesty of *Catholic* Spain with a significant silence, while we can thankfully say, long live her Majesty "VICTORIA, of *Protestant* England."

APPENDIX VIII.

THE CASE OF SION MONASTERY, ITS DISORDERS AND FORTUNES.

(Introductory Remarks, p. xl.)

"Sion House," whether in its extent of privilege and dotation from its founder, Henry V., its strictness of rule, or laxity of observance, under the near observation of the world of London, seems to have presented as fair a mark as any religious house in England for visitation and suppression.

The peculiar constitution of this house, as described in the "*Monasticon*," has been not inaptly called "An Institution ingeniously calculated to torture the human passions into immorality;" and a summary of it may tend to explain some matters in the "*Reports*," which we shall have to give presently:—

"A monastery of sixty nuns, thirteen priests, four deacons, and eight lay brothers; the men and women in separate convents, but one church, in which the nuns kept above in a kind of gallery, and the men below."—*Monasticon*, vol. i. p. 473.

This state of juxtaposition, established by the fantastic rule of the "*Bridgetines*" (founded not by the *Irish* Bridget, but a Swedish Queen of the name, who obtained canonization at Rome in 1391), presented too obvious a topic for satirists to escape. *Bale* accordingly, from the "*Speculum Stultorum of Nigal Wircker*," translates some pungent extracts, from which I select the following as most presentable:—

"What should I much prate
An order it is begun of late,
 Yet will I not let the matter passe;
 The silly brethren and sisters, alas!
 Can have no meeting, but late in the darke,
 And this, you know welle, is a heavie warke."

The same idea is more euphoniously expressed by a modern poet,* who pictures the state of things in a similar community, thus:—

“ He saw through the night so dun,
The cowering monk and the veiled nun,
Whispering, sighing, and stealing away,
By cross dark alley and portal gray;
While sires in dread of sins unshriven,
Would shake their heads and look up to heaven,
Afraid the frown of the saint to see,
To whom in the chancel they bended knee.”

The visitors, in their report of the state of things at Sion, speak of certain men there as “*the saddest and most learned of the community* ;” probably by “*saddest*” they mean most serious; but the state of things among which their vows bound these learned men to live, might well make them “*sad*,” in the modern and popular acceptation of the word.

This house was in its pitch of pride, superstition, and vice, when the countenance which the impostor, Elizabeth Barton, had found there attracted the angry attention of King Henry to the community, and induced a special determination that the King’s supremacy should be *there* specially acknowledged, in contravention to the nun’s lying warning against “taking any of the Pope’s honour from him.” To do the inmates of Sion all justice, the King’s visitors found in them none of that unanimity of stiff-necked principle which had distinguished their confreres of the London Charter House. “Maister Bedyll” reports to Cromwell, on the 28th July, that he found “*The Lady Abbas and susters as conformable in every thing as might be devysed* ;” and in one of the confessors (not named, but supposed to be Bisshoppe) an entire readiness, “*on Sonday, to make due mension of the Kinge’s title of supreme hed, according as he is commanded*.” The report goes on to hint at the “*untowardness*” of a few others of the Sion brethren, and the possible necessity of “*weeding out some two or three who laboured busily to infect their fellows with obstinacy against the King’s title*”—this being, as has been already urged, *the point*, and *the only point*, originally at issue between the King and the monk-dom of England.

* “Queen’s Wake.”

Six months passed away, and a very different "visitation report" of the same monastery issues from Commissioners looking into things more closely and severely. "*Confessor Bisshoppe*" declared the King's title "to a gret audience and church full of people" as fluently as ever. True, one "*folisshe fellowe, with a curled head!*" openly called him a knave, with other folished wordes," and was placed in prison, "*ut pœna ejus sit metus aliorum ;*" but on the whole, the sermon seems to have passed over well. Not so well, however, was the issue of a private examination of the lay brethren, by that keen questhound of abuses, Doctor Richard Layton! He learns "*many enormous things against Bisshoppe,*" such as his "tempting two of the brethren to have "gon their ways" with him (on some "skeldering" expedition), a proposal which failed only because "*they lacked moneys to by the secular apparel.*" "*Then wolde he have persuadyt a lay brother, a smyth, to have med a key for the doore to have in the nyght tyme receivide in wenches for hym and his felowe;*" and "*specially a wiffe of Uxbridge now dwellinge not farre from the old Ladye Darbie!*" Of his guidance of a nun to whom he was confessor, it is enough to say, that it verifies the worst tales of confessional corruption and sophistry, and brought him fully within the worst anathema of the constitution of Benedict II., "*de muliere solicitando ;*" lastly, "*he persuadyt the sexton that he wolde be in his contemplacion in the churche by nyght, and by that meanes was many nyghts in the church talking at the grete of the nunne's quere with that nunne,* with whom he found a bar'd window too straight a place for their *commonying place by nyght,*" besides their day communication, as in confession. Here was the case and character of a "Sion House King's man;" and truly, when we turn to those of the house who stood "for Queen Catherine and the Pope," we find little to choose between them. While Layton was sifting the lay brothers, Layton's fellow-Commissioner, BEDYLL, had taken in hand certain obstinate brethren who stood out against the King's title; in particular, two confessors named "*Whitforde and Littel,*" whom Bedyl did not hesitate to try to enlighten on the point of the King's supremacy, by threatening *to enlighten the world at large* as to their own shame and sensuality:—

"On Tuesday I handled Whitforde in the garden, *both with fair wordes and foule,* and shewed him that, through his obstinacy he shuld be broghte to the grete shame of the world for his irreligious life, and for his using of bawdy wordes to divers ladies at the tyme of theyr confession; whereby (I seyde) he might be the

occasion that shrifte shalle be layed down through England—but he hath a brasyn forehead, which shameth at nothings. One Mathew, a lay brother, on hope of liberty, is *reformed*. We would fayne know your advice what we shall doe with Whitforde and Littel, and a lay brother, one Turnyngton, which is very sturdie agaynst the Kinge's title. We have sequestered Whitforde and Littel from hereing of the ladie's confessions, and we think it best that the place wher thes frires have been wont to hire utward confessions of alle commers at certayn times of the yere, *be walled up*, and that use to be fordoen for ever, ffor that hering of utward confessions hath been the cause of much evyl, *and of much treason, which hath been sowed abroad*, in this mater of the Kinge's title, and also in the King's Grace's mater of his succession and marriage."

This is the separate report of Bedyll, who refers to the more exact "compertes"* (discoveries) of his colleague, Maister Layton, as a reason for his being silent concerning them, while Layton, "seemingly of a more austere virtue, and a more severe inquisitor after pravity than his colleague," speaks of these nuns very differently: for when Bedyll rather makes out a case for the Sion sisterhood, whose facile towardness (with the exception of one sturdy dame and wyful "named Agnes Smyth") in owning the King's title "covers a multitude of sins" in his eyes, so that he prefers their request to Cromwell, that "*he will be good Lord to them and their hous.*" Layton, on the other hand, seems rather to disparage and vilipend Bedyll, as scarce better than the delinquents they were commissioned to visit, for, in the following passage of his separate report, he sneers and hints thus suspiciously against him:—

"If M. Bedyll had been here a frear, *and of Bisshope's council*, he would right well have helped him to have brought his matter to passe, without any breaking up of anye graite, or yett counterfeytyng of keyes, such capacitie God hathe sende hym.

"From Syon, this xii. of Decembris, by the speedy hande of your assured poire preste, "R. L."

"A mad world my masters," in which it seemed a mere case of "handy-dandy,"

* The Editor of the "Suppression of Monasteries" understands "compertes" (*comperta*) as a word appropriated to the *confessions* of the religious men and women. I should say it had a more general meaning, and that it applied to matters found out by any means whatsoever.

“which was justice and which thief”—and, strange to say, equally uncertain whether the same individual was most pietist or profligate. In a notice of Sion Monastery, we find incidentally the following remarkable “set off” pleaded for the undeniable irregularities of the establishment:—

“Many works, the offspring of united piety and industry, have proceeded from it—*Richard Whitford!!!* a monk of Sion, was author of the following, among other religious tracts:—

“The Martyroloquie, as read in Sion, A.D. 1526, a Dailie Exercise and Experience of Death, by the Old Wretche of Syon, R. W.! 1532.”

“A Dialogue between the Curate and the Parishioner, for a due preparation for the Howselinge, A.D. 1537.

“A Treatise of Patience, A.D. 1541.”

Can “that confessor with the brazen forehead,” whom the visitor “handled” in the Convent garden, the stumbling-block of shrifte through England, who, for his filthiness in the confessional was “sequestered from hearing confessions of the ladies;” can *that* be the same individual who here figures as a “painful and pious” author of books of devotion? It looks but too like it, for though it is possible, yet is it not very probable that there should be two of the same name. The date of the first works agrees with the time of our visitation, and presents the sorrie spectacle of an “old wretche” putting forth workes of piety before men, while living in habitual impurity before God; of a spiritual director teaching men to prepare for that howseling which his habits of life were rendering hateful to them. Well might Richard Layton exclaim as he does, concerning the place:—“*such religion and fayned sanctitie, God save me fro.*”

The subsequent history of these “Bridgetine Dames” is curious. In long after revelations we learn that the labours of “the Sturdy Dame and wilful, *Agnes Smyth*” “*that the Sisters should not give up their Convent seal,*” had been effectual—for the seal is at this moment in the possession of an existing community of the Sisterhood, as we shall briefly trace. At the dissolution of their house, the great body of the nuns migrated to Flanders—then back to England and Sion, during the short reign of Mary—then again to Mechlin in the Low Countries—to Rouen—and at last to Lisbon, where their arrival and settlement is thus recorded:—

"On the 4th day of May, in the year 1594, arrived in the port fifteen English nuns of the Order of St. Bridget, with a novice, accompanied by three fathers of the same Order. They were the only remaining part of the community of Mount Sion, near London, which, before the abolition of that monastery, consisted of sixty nuns, and twenty-five friars, who, after that disastrous event, had wandered through France and Flanders, in an unsettled state, and forced by the wars to change often their asylum. On their arrival at Lisbon, they were received by the Franciscan nuns of Nostra Senora de la Esperança, and in that convent they lived till the Lady Isabel de Avezedo made them a gift of houses and ground in Mocambo, where they built their church and monastery. Philip the Second endowed them with a revenue of two milreas per diem (or about £200 per annum), payed from the Crown Revenues at Santarem, which was, by other presents, after increased to 5,000 crusadoes. Two secular priests administer the spiritual and temporal concerns of the community.

"In 1651, their establishment was burned to the ground, and their Sisters of the Esperança, for five years, sheltered them. Within five years they had it rebuilt by the munificence of Ruy Correa Lucas and his wife, and continued to occupy it to the time of their fleeing to England again, on the invasion of the French."

The Roman Catholic author by whom this is extracted from the "*Corografia Portugueza de Carvatho*," says, "I omit on purpose several *miracles* and *prophecies* related of this Order, as useless to history, and *doing little credit to our clergy*."

During their sojourn at Lisbon, their house furnished subject for a singular satire, preserved to us in "Morgan's Phoenix Britannicus," and entitled "The Anatomy of the English Nunnery at Lisbon," in which "Thomas Robinson" (who entitles himself "*younger* brother" of the Order, and says he only escaped by flight from "growing to be as bad as the *oldest* among them") applies his satiric scalping-knife to lay bare a state of morals in the inmates quite as bad as that reported of the original house at Sion, with the additional charge of being suborners of assassination! for this babbling brother affirms that he "*had read in the Convent Register*" an entry of "no small sum of money," of which they were the custodees, in order to reward Doctor Lopez, a Portuguese physician, who had set his life on the

venture of taking off Elizabeth of England by poyson; and when "missing his intent, he was executed," the money "lying in their hands, was *remitted to them as an alms*," and they felt no scruples as to putting "the price of blood" into their Convent Treasury. Another exposure of this strange tale gives an example of that stealthy creeping into houses and families, said to be at *this* day largely practised by reviving mediævalism in England, and is too curious and characteristic to be passed over.

After relating that the members of the original Sion community "*were wont to be of good descent*," he contrasts with them the present sisterhood as chiefly made up of "recusants' daughters of the meaner sort;" "silly, tender-hearted chamber-maids," and "a rabble of such like stuff." He then goes on to tell how the English nunnery had "*given the Jesuits' nose a wipe of two thousand pounds*" (i.e., circumvented them to that amount), "being the portions of two daughters of Sir A. B., Visct. M., whom a *nun of the house (sometime a chambermaid of their father), had enticed from the Jesuits*. From a list of the sisterhood appended to the "Anatomy," we learn that these initials signify "*Barbara and Lucy Brown, daughters of Sir Anthony Brown, Lord Montacute*;" while the sister who "enticed them" is named as "*Anne, his chambermaid*." Whether the policy of reviving monachism may not now be doing some of its work through "chamber-maid agency," is a question perhaps deserving the consideration of parents and guardians of England.

This satire, or libel, or confession, whichever it deserves to be called, was published about two hundred years ago, and we lose sight of these "Bridgetine Dames" until about the year 1811, when the late "Doctor Milner," as skilled as any man of his day, in insinuating the interests of his church, under an antiquarian or archæologic masque, enrolled in the Records of the "*Archæologia*," a fac-simile of the original "Sion House Seal,"* together with a brief sketch of the fate and adventures of the sisterhood up to that date, when he describes them as having been driven by the French invaders from their Lisbon nunnery, and at that date located

* Some mystery or *management* exists on this point. In vol. xvii. of the *Archæologia*, Doctor Milner gave a supposed *fac simile*, with a partly illegible legend. In vol. xxi., several years afterwards, he presents a seal wholly differing in shape, legend, and device, as "The *last* seal used by the Bridgetine Nuns, and still in their possession." When these "Dames" come to reclaim Sion House, on the strength of the "*nullum tempus*" axiom, under *which seal* is their claim of succession to be authenticated?

to the number of nine sisters "in a small house at Walworth." In a few years after he speaks of three survivors as residing "in the village of Cobridge, among the Potteries, two miles from Newcastle." Following their traces, we find them, in a Romish Directory for 1836, described as "The Bridgetine Dames, from Lisbon, formerly of Sion, at Aston Hall, near Stone, Staffordshire." But wherever located, *pro tem.*, "*The Anatomy*" warns us of a "word of prophecy" preserved in their house that "*they expect another golden age when they shall yet again be installed in Sion,*" on which their scoffing "*younger brother*" remarks,

"Admiranda canunt, sed non credenda sorores."

A curious *pendent* to these notices is preserved in "Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa," in the shape of an "admission ticket," bearing date 26th March, 1536, co-opting "*Agnes,* Abbess,*" "*John, General Confessor,*" and all the sisterhood and brotherhood of Sion monastery in a body, into all the benefits and advantages of All-Souls College, in Oxford. This is granted by ROBERT WOODWARD, as "*custos*" of the College, and seems to be the return for some unnamed benefits conferred on the institution—" *Illis benefacere tenemur, quorum beneficiis et liberalitate, tenuitas nostra suppedita sit.*" It is not improbable that the Sion establishment, in a consciousness of coming dissolution, bestowed some of their possessions or treasures on the Oxford foundation, in return for which the All-Souls custos sends, not gold or silver—" *mittant alii aurum, argentum, gemmas—nos mittimus, thesaurum, non carnis sed spiritus, quo facilius, mercari possitis, margaritam illam Evangelicam ;*" and this spiritual treasure is finally made over on the House of Sion in the following comprehensive grant:—

"Vos, sorores ac Fratres, in Christo dilectissimi, omnes et singulos, et successores vestros, participes facimus, omnium divinorum, officiorum, cantionum, precum, missarum, studiorum, eleemosynarum, jejuniorum, et indulgentiarum, nobis ac collegio concessarum, atque his scriptis pollicemur nos successores quoque nostros et singulos, pro vobis et successoribus vestris, apud Clementissimum sedulo precaturos. Promittentes etiam quod ubi alicujus

* Probably "the sturdy Agnes Smith" of the Visitor's Reports (p. 72).

vestrum, aut successorum vestrorum obitus declaratus fuerit, pro his quem admodum pro aliis benefactoribus collegii nostri solemus, exequias, aliaque divina officia, communiter celebrabimus.

“Datum quoad appensionem sigilli in Aula nostra Magna xxvi. die Martii, Anno Domini milesimo quinquegesimo, tricesimo sexto.”

Such were the *Assignats* with which the Unreformed Church of England had contrived to pay for “*nigh one-third of the Kingdome*,” which had passed into “religious hands,” when the “besom of Reformation” came to sweep all away.

Possibly, the solution of the foregoing interchange of benefits between “All-Souls and Sion” may be found in the fact, that two years before, by an instrument dated 28th September, 1534, Roger Stukely, then “custos of All-Souls,” had put forth under college seal, for himself and fellows, “*uno ore, et voce unanimi consensu et assensu*,” a declaration as follows:—

“*Item*,—Confirmatum ratumque habemus, et semper et perpetuo habituri sumus, quod prædictus Rex Noster *Henricus* est Caput Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.

“*Item*,—Quod Episcopus *Romanus* qui in suis bullis *Papæ* nomen usurpat, et summi Pontificis principatum sibi arrogat, non habet majorem aliquam jurisdictionem collatam sibi a Deo, in hoc regno Angliæ, quam quivis alius exterus Episcopus.”

It may have been that the Sion community deemed that any possessions assigned to a foundation so thoroughly subservient to the King's will, would be in safe keeping until better days might arrive.

APPENDIX IX.

“NOT BADLY PROVIDED FOR!”

(*Introductory Remarks*, p. xliv.)

THE passage from Cardinal Wiseman's Concordat Lectures, adverted to in the text is that (*Second Lecture*, p. 13) in which, after insisting, with more diffuseness than consistency, that “*The fully organised Church, complete in jurisdiction and authority, had no necessary connection with the world, and could go on for ever without it*”—he proceeds to say:—“*It is clear that the Church HAD need of temporal assistance, not to provide it with endowments, but for the OPERATION OF ITS POWER, which the spread of error rendered necessary.*” This is that “secular arm,” which the church calls in to lend its decrees œcumenical weight and to do its “*rough work*” on heresy or schism; but “for endowments,” boasts the Cardinal, “*through the charity of the faithful, even in times of persecution, the Church had not been badly provided for.*” The tone of exultation in this last sentence suggests to me to append here the statement of a case, in which the Cardinal was more or less engaged, which excited considerable notice a few years ago, as “THE TAYLOR CASE,” though it has since, doubtless, given place in public recollection to topics of newer interest; but I find it so graphically told, in an Analysis of the Report of “The Mortmain Committee of 1851,” now out of print, and so illustrative of the nature of that reservoir of resource from whence the Church of Rome draws its “endowments,” that I insert it here in practical comment on the general statement of the text as—

“THE TAYLOR CASE.”

“Our analysis of this extraordinary exposure (*The Mortmain Evidence of 1851*,) now brings us to ‘*The Taylor Bequest Case*’—not the least remarkable of those elicited in the evidence before the Mortmain Committee; but rendered peculiarly interesting, as having given occasion for an exhibition of the ingenious

candour of that 'Prince of the Church,' sent by the Pope, in his paternal anxiety to 'restore England to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament.' Although the Cardinal figured as defendant, in the Chancery suit of '*Metairie versus Wiseman*,' we have already acquitted him of any *personal* participation in the '*practices*,' resorted to in the case of *Mathurin Carrè*. He stood equally exempt from implication in the 'Taylor Case,' if, by one of those blunders into which cunning will sometimes fall, he had not exhibited himself as attempting one of the worst modes of deception, that of 'telling a lie in the language of truth.' Nor is the general exhibition, which this prototype of the Roman system made before the Committee on Mortmain Law, devoid of interest. Among other 'Aggression' anecdotes, it has been told to us, that when Pio Nono intimated to the Cardinal his purpose of sending him to 'head a hierarchy' in England, some feeling of misgiving blanked the bold Wiseman visage, and that he hinted to his Holiness—'What, if the purple should be dishonoured there?' whereupon the Pope silenced the demur, by saying—'Go! and any dishonour put upon you by the English heretics will only brighten the purple yet more.' No doubt, upon general principle, his Holiness judged correctly, and in some sort, nobly. There *are* dishonours which recoil on those who offer them; there *are* contumelies against which the sufferer can smile and rise superior—but what shall be said of the discredit we bring on *ourselves*: of the contumely to which *our own* acts expose us? Pio Nono never reckoned on having his Prince Cardinal caught 'paltering his hearers with a double sense,' or that his 'delegate' would be detected in an act of duplicity for which a practising attorney would be struck off the roll; and yet, such is the position in which the case before us exhibits Cardinal Wiseman, as attempting, by his own act and deed, to impose on the habitual belief of the 'noble-hearted people of England,' that a man *means* what he expresses in *words*. Such is the case we have now to consider.

"In the whirl of the phantasmagoria of French politics, it would not surprise us, some day, to find that volatile people preferring a request to '*perfidé Albion*' to give them back the bones of the first and last 'King of the French.' Should the day for such a requisition ever arrive, the remains of the exiled monarch, Louis Philippe, will be found resting in the private cemetery of a

‘ Mr. Taylor, of Weybridge,’ where the Royal Wanderer has found a last halting, if not a resting-place. This is *the Mr. Taylor* whose bequest to the church we have now to examine. He died in the year 1846, at the age of 85 years, leaving one son and three daughters. Some years before his death he had made a will, giving his property among his family; to use one witness’s words—‘ I believe the story was—that the old gentleman made a family will, which all the family knew of; but after his death, when the will was going to be read, they found *another document, altogether unlike* the one which the family had known of, and *that will was proved.*’ This is not quite the correct version of the affair. Mr. Taylor’s son (a solicitor) *knew* that his father intended to make a ‘ disinheriting will’ (for the poor old man told him so), giving as his reason, that IT WOULD BE ‘ FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS SOUL! FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THEIR SOULS!’ yet, he declined to ‘ have anything to do with it.’ But though the son refused to disinherit himself with his own hand, the hand of one of the faithful was found to do the deed; the old man’s will *was* made, giving ‘ all his property at Weybridge, on which he had expended £20,000,’ and twenty freehold houses in London, the rental of which, at moderate calculations, could not be taken as less than £1,200 per annum, to his four children *for life*; and then to ‘ *Doctor Griffiths,*’ or ‘ *The Vicar-Apostolic of London for the time being,*’ in absolute possession. Even the ‘ gift for life’ was a successive one, to his eldest daughter first, then to his other daughters successively; last of all, to his son, ‘ James Molyneaux Taylor;’ and after their respective deaths to ‘ *The Vicar-Apostolic of the Roman Catholic Church in the London district, and his heirs for ever.*’ And now the character of the family comes to be considered, in asking why this extraordinary will has not been disputed? We should be sorry, indeed, to hurt or annoy personal feelings; we are, however, but copying evidence published to the empire, when we say, that the brother was in infirm health, and of prostrated mind; the sisters were ‘ *entirely in the hands of the priest who got the will made;*’ the brother, who seemed to have some natural manly feeling left, was overcome and borne down by the outrage of this unnatural will of an imbecile old man. One of the witnesses describes his case thus—‘ *The effect of this will is, that it has quite destroyed*

him; 'he was before in very good health;' 'he is quite an altered man in consequence.' The whole family, father and children, furnish a miserable example of the state of pupilage to which the Church of Rome reduces its votaries, when they are found sufficiently docile and submissive. In this instance, however, the Prince of the Church presumed a *little* too much on the prostration of mind and feeling in the 'child of the church,' as the event will shew.

"In the very paroxysm of the 'Aggression Fever' of 1850, among other ugly deeds alleged to have been quietly perpetrated by that church, which came to reclaim us all as its 'subjects,' this '*Taylor case*' began to be whispered. It was said that four children of an aged father were defrauded of their inheritance, and that the 'Prince Cardinal' was reaping, or to reap, the benefit. Whereupon, an honest, plain-dealing, and fair-meaning English dissenter, 'John Dean, of Sittingbourne,' who had heard this damaging rumour, took the straightforward course of writing to the Cardinal; and a good, honest, *English* letter it was. He told the Cardinal that he '*hated fraud,*' but that he '*hated misrepresentation also;*' that there was an ugly report current of his (*Cardinal Wiseman*) having the property of Mr. Taylor's disinherited children; and that he (*John Dean*) would '*be glad to contradict the report if he could*'—(bless honest John Dean's unsuspecting heart, say we, who sat down to write, in the fond hope that he could draw undiluted truth from a practised casuist of the Church of Rome). To this point-blank application, the Cardinal wrote what unsuspecting Mr. Dean called a '*most candid! and satisfactory letter!!*' with which he forthwith repaired, like a true Briton, to the *British Banner*, a thorough-going Dissenter's journal, which at once published the correspondence, with a glowing editorial article, evidently written on the assumption that the whole story against 'the poor Cardinal' was a malignant '*Anglican lie;*' and the article opened with the following Parthian truism:—'*Never is falsehood more contemptible and odious, than when it has become mingled with truth.*' We know not of what 'perilous stuff' the Cardinal's conscience can be composed, if he did not *writhe* when he became cognisant of this line of defence, taken by his honest but hoodwinked advocate.

"The Prince Cardinal ('all things to all men'), at the time when '*seated*'

in Golden-square he was receiving the homage of his *kneeling* 'subjects,' wrote to bluff John Dean an *open*-hearted letter, commencing in the following frank words:—'*Dear Sir,—I am much obliged for your manly and straightforward application to me ;*' and he then goes on, by every possible mode of *implication*, to persuade 'John Dean' that the whole story about Mr. Taylor was a fabrication. '*I never in my life saw, nor spoke to, nor corresponded with, the late Mr. Taylor! . . . I am not named in his will!! . . . Since coming to London, I have had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Taylor's excellent family. I have visited them at Weybridge. I am on terms of perfect good understanding with Mr. James Taylor, the SUPPOSED disinherited son, who, with his sisters, enjoys EVERY FARTHING of his father's property!!!*' How could a more 'candid' and complete answer to a calumny be given?—how could Mr. Dean, or any one else, doubt the innocence of the maligned Cardinal? Ah! Mr. Dean, Mr. Dean!—and ah! Editor of the *British Banner*!—and ah! thousands and tens of thousands of honest, plain-meaning Englishmen, whose minds are moulded upon the holy Scriptural Christian rule of letting your 'yea be yea,' and your 'nay, nay!'—how little do you know of the refinements and subtleties of veracity, as it comes out of the training-schools of Rome! How blind are you to the difference between a denial, *simpliciter*, and a denial, '*secundum quid*!' And yet these refinements—these wire-drawings of truth—are thoroughly familiar to the minds of all Roman casuists, and, of course, to '*that most eminent and most honourable lord, THE CARDINAL,*' who seems never to have imagined that it might be needful for him to explain by what rule of ethics, *facts being as they are now known to be*, he called Mr. James Taylor, with whom he (the *imagined* usurper of his inheritance) '*was on terms of perfect good understanding.*'—'*a SUPPOSED disinherited son.*'

"It would seem as if this 'good understanding' had carried the Cardinal somewhat beyond the limits of caution. He thought he might take a small liberty with 'his subject;' and, accordingly, among other topics of his letter, he quoted Mr. Taylor as '*offering to give any contradiction he (Cardinal Wiseman) pleased, to the calumny.*' This was going a '*little too far.*' The tortures of the Inquisition, they say, can force its victims to accuse themselves, and seal their

sufferings by acknowledging them to be righteously deserved; but though Mr. James Taylor has, in all things, shown himself patient and submissive to his hard lot, his 'Eminent Lord' seems to have reckoned somewhat too much on the 'endurance which is the badge of his tribe.' Even a worm will turn; and plundered, 'disinherited' Mr. Taylor *did* turn; yet, in such mild fashion, and with such gentle rebuke, as should serve to 'heap coals of fire' on his supplanter's head. Perhaps Mr. Taylor's quiet statement (considering that he is a docile, submissive child of the cruel Church which plunders him) puts the matter in the strongest light against the system, and its brazen-faced representative. The words of his letter, which ought to shame the Cardinal, and must stain his purple for ever, are as follows:—

“ ‘The bulk of my father's property is left to his children for their lives only; and upon their decease is given to the use of the late Dr. Griffiths, if living (poor, calumniated *Wiseman* is “*not named*,” we see), and if not, to the then Vicar-Apostolic for the London district, for the time being. The will contains no power enabling me to make any provision whatever in favour of a wife or children, as to the property so devised; but, on the contrary, my life estate is coupled with very stringent provisions (the usual “gagging clause”) against any attempt at incumbrance or alienation. Such a will appeared to me to create, not a *supposed*, but a *real* and *effectual* disinheritance, and such I have always felt it to be. I should add, that the will was executed by a most kind and affectionate parent, after he had attained the age of eighty years and upwards, and when his mind was affected by severe illness, and in immediate contemplation of that great change, the approach of which renders the strongest and best-prepared *wholly unable to resist any influences which may be brought to assume the sanction of religion*. I should further add, that about four years before, my father had executed a will in which his whole property had been left for the benefit of his children.’

“Such is the mild, unexaggerated statement of a son, who, when asked if there had ever been any interruption of entire ‘filial confidence between him and his deceased parent?’ was able to answer—‘*I never, to my knowledge, had a word with him in the course of a long life!!!*’ No wonder, that with all his

mildness and submission to his hard lot, he should in answer to a question, whether he could suggest any amendment of the existing law, *hint* to the Committee, that it '*might be worth their consideration,*' whether that part of the 'Code Civile' of France, should not be made part of the law of England, which prohibits

" 'All persons in attendance on a man in his last illness, such as medical men, and clergymen of the particular religion to which he belongs, and all who have access to him as assistants, from taking any legacy whatever.'

" We quite agree with Mr. Taylor that some such provision would be most desirable for the protection of her Majesty's lieges of the Roman communion, against the vultures and harpies who are apt to hover round the beds of the dying, in the guise of ministers of religion."

This is "The Taylor Case," but one, and perhaps not the most remarkable, of several fully brought out before the Mortmain Committee; it thoroughly verifies the boast of a late English Vicar-Apostolic, that "*the repeal of the law of superstitious uses would be a sufficient lever for him to make England Catholic.*" But let us hope that English law will long interpose its needful, though imperfect, shield between the cajolery of an unscrupulous church and "the charity of its credulous children," miscalled "the faithful."

APPENDIX X.

ENGLISH ECHOES OF THE "QUERELA DE FIDE."

(Introductory Remarks, p. xlv.)

THE continental secular's "plaint," against the begging friars, had its echoes from England. Robert Longland, a secular priest of Shropshire, in his "Piers Plowman's Vision" tells us how

"Friars folowed folke that were riche,
And folke that were poore at little price they set,
And no corse in his kyrke-yard, nor kyrke was buried
But quick he bequeth them ought, or quit part of his debts;"

and in Chaucer's "Sompner's Tale," the friar comes thus roundly to the point with the dying farmer:—

"Yield me of thy gold to make our cloister,
Quod* he, for many a muskle, and many an oister,
When other menne have beene full well at ease,
Hath been our food, our cloister for to rease;
And yet, God wot, unneath the fundament
Performed is, ne of our pavement
Is not a tile yet within our wones,
By God, we owen fourty pound for stones!"

* Quoth.

“ Valde diligenter notant
 Ubi divites ægrotant,
 Ibi currunt nec cessabunt
 Donec ipsos tumultabunt.”

These words remind me to notice here a remarkable *received* reading by the present “recognised” Canonist of Rome—of that *Canon Law* to the application of which Cardinal Wiseman* points as one of the remote ends for replacing English Vicars-Apostolic by an Hierarchy.

To a question propounded in St. Alphonsus Liguori, as to the validity of a will, defective in the forms required by civil law, the answer is:—

“ If a will be made to pious uses, even in the public court, they are not required; but as to the Court of Conscience, the power of the testator being granted, a writing, *a nod!* or other *sign* of the testator, without any witness, is sufficient, and although death intervening, and that will should not have been perfected, it is valid for the *pious uses* expressed in it.”

“ This,” adds the witness who delivers this evidence, “ is the *last* approved theological opinion; in Rome it would be held to be—*law!*”

We must not, however, understand from this, that Liguori’s opinion is either original or new. So long ago as when the “ Statute of Wills” opened a wide door for fraud to practise on the weakness of the dying, we find traces of this mode of interpreting a “ disposing mind.” In the following story, oft “ merrily told ” by Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, who used to call this statute “ the ruin of ancient families—the nurse of forgeries—for by colour of making wills, men’s lands were conveyed in extremity of their sickness, when they had no power of disposing of them;” for the remedy of which state of things his Lordship used jocosely to tell this anecdote:—

“ A friar coming to visit a great man in his sickness, and finding him past memory, took opportunity, *according to the custom of the times*, to make provision for the monastery where he was, and finding that the sick man could only speak some one syllable, which was for the most part ‘ yea ’ or ‘ nay,’ in an

* “ We must have a Hierarchy. The Canon Law is inapplicable under Vicars-Apostolic.”—*Wiseman’s Appeal to the English People*, 1850.

imperfect voice, forthwith took upon him to make his will, and demanding of him—"Will you give such a piece of land to our Hous, to praie for your soul?" The dying man sounded '*yea*.' Then he asked him—"Will you give such land to the maintenance of lights for our Lady?" The sound was again '*yea*.' Whereupon he boldly asked him many such questions. The son and heir standing by, and *hearing his land going away so fast by his father's word*, '*yea*,' thought fit to ask a question as well as the friar, which was—"Sir, shall I take a cudgel and beat this friar out of the chamber?" The sick man's answer was, as usual, '*yea*,' which the son quickly performed, and saved to himself his father's lands."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 1226.

APPENDIX XI.

SUPPRESSION OF ITALIAN MONASTERIES.

(Introductory Remarks, p. xli.)

THE quiet suppression or amalgamation of Conventual Houses, thus going on unsuspected, under direction of the Pontiff himself, appears a most remarkable fact, especially as it does not appear to be done by the application of the "Cy-pres" principle, for the resources of the suppressed houses are unquestionably applied not to other religious uses, but to the exigencies of the State. Of course it may be argued that the Government being Ecclesiastical, a State exigency is a Church exigency at Rome, and that contributions to maintain the Papal honour and dignity having been at one time one of the great demands on the religious revenues of the world, it is perfectly legitimate for the ruling Pontiff to supply any lack of "Peter's pence," by applying an "appropriation clause" to dwindling or effete religious communities. Upon whatever principle the Papacy acts, there is no doubt that in effect it is paring down and lopping the dead and decaying monk-wood from the monastic tree, as mentioned. One or two personal observations on the Conventual Institutions of Italy I may here record:—

The first is, the undue proportion to other houses in which "*Certosa*" or "*Carthusian*" Convents have been suppressed, secularised, or deprived of their revenues. The occasions were numerous in which we found the noble buildings of these establishments turned to secular uses. At Bologna, "The Campo Santo," which is one of the "lions" of the city for the tourist, is a suppressed *Certosa*, and so elsewhere. At Naples, where the *Certosa* Convent, for situation, size, style of

building, and finish, is one of the most beautiful, perhaps, in the world, the few inmates wander about an establishment "a world too wide for their shrunken numbers;" rather like the ghosts of an extinct community, than living occupants of a great foundation. The Order must have lost its repute, or resources, in some larger proportion than others, or there must be some other special reason for its houses being visited by the hand of the spoiler with such severity.

The other remark which occurs to me is, that but for the prestige and prescription arising from services rendered to the Papacy in times and circumstances long gone by and far different from ours, the religious houses and orders through Italy might be either amalgamated or done away with still more largely, without any real damage or weakening to the Papal cause or strength. In many, very many cases, it seemed to me that, in habits, ideas, or intelligence, the ordinary friar was rather an hindrance than a help to his church; that a thoroughly blind faith could alone enable any one to imagine sanctity or utility to belong to such fraternities as some I saw; and that, but for their favour and influence with the blind vulgar, any master-mind would gladly suppress them, not by tens but by hundreds, as incumbrances to the church they once contributed to uphold.

From this remark, however, *one Order* must be excepted, if, indeed, the *Jesuit* can be called a monastic order. Everything about this singular body of men, as far as an uninitiated eye could scan them—their houses, their churches, their organization, their intelligence—was complete and effective. If ever we saw, as we sometimes did, a church in a transition state, passing from dirt and decay to order and decency; if we saw the service of the Mass performed with a propriety and solemnity contrasting strongly with the disgusting irreverence with which other Brotherhoods humm'd through it, we were sure to find that the church had lately passed into the care of "the Jesuits!" Whatever zeal, organization, ability, and obedience can perform, Jesuitism will accomplish; and yet nothing gives me a stronger impression of some disabling element in the constitution of this society than the fact that, with such admirable qualities to command respect and ensure success, the gorge of the world should be for ever rising against their aims and objects, and that their very name, in despite of its *holy* derivation, should have passed into a synonyme for all that fair-meaning and fair-dealing men most dislike and shun.

APPENDIX XII.

"QUID DE ORDINE SENTIRET."

(Vita Franconis, p. 14.)

THE section of the poem thus distinguished, furnishes internal evidence that it was written at no very long period after the first establishment of the house. Had the Cistercian Order then obtained that repute and influence at which it ultimately arrived, when popes, priors, saints, and beatified sons came out of it in multitudes, the author, or his confreres, would not be likely to exhibit that sensitive anxiety for the opinion of an aged and individual monk on the *rule* of the house which is here and generally throughout expressed; nor would his observance of the rule be so much insisted on as an essential part of his great merit, if it had not been an object with his biographer to enforce on the yet infant community the precept,

"Stabiles in ordine nostro persistamus;"

so that I think we may, with great probability, lay the time of Franco's Brotherhood within the first eighty years from the foundation.

APPENDIX XIII.

EXTRACT FROM THE "DISCIPLINA BENEDICTORUM."

(Pp. 16 and 28.—*Stanzas xxxi. and lv.*)

THE following extracts from the "*Vetus Disciplina Monastica*," will explain those passages of the text which refer to the duties of the "*Infirmarius*" towards the sick brethren, as also the reason of Franco's refusing to sit up and partake of the "*promissas epulas*" until he had returned from the "*oratorium*," as prescribed by that discipline of the Order which he observed so strictly:—

"INFIRMARIUS ad obsequium infirmorum seperatum habet coquum et coquinam—a Cellerario quærit—quod habet opus, atque nusquam debet carere operâ; ut quod infirmis ad refectionem est preparandum, tempestivè preparet—nam si conventus duabus vicibus comederet tunc qui in lecto non jacuerent, non omittunt ad majorem missam interesse, usque dum Evangelium sit lectum.

"Si quis fratrum, adeo est infirmus, ut de lecto surgere non possit, ad hunc quotidie summo diliculo, simul cum Infirmario, venire debet Cellerarius, et de omnibus quæ habere potest, scisitatur ab eo, si quid sit, quod sibi placeat, et preparet ad ejus recreationem.

"Infirmarius debet Priori notificare, quod frater est prope suum finem. Prior vero, si æger habuerit memoriam præcepit alicui fratrum, ut legat coram eo, "*passiones*."

It would seem that the "*frater deputatus*" in Franco's case, substituted the "*Ave Maria*" for the narrative of OUR LORD's passion—a very symbolic expression of the *tendency* of Roman devotions, then and since.

APPENDIX XIV.

CERTAIN "GESTES" OF ST. BERNARD.

IN looking through the works of St. Bernard (Paris edition, 1839), I find, in one of several biographies of the Saint contained therein, one narrative of his "gestes" and wondrous doings which contrasts so remarkably with the moderation of our simple biographer, in nowhere claiming *miraculous* powers for his Establishment, though otherwise sufficiently inclined to laud it, that I think an extract worth introducing in a note. A certain *Gaufridus* monk of Clairvaulx, who filled the post of Notary to the Abbot, once accompanied Bernard on a perigrination, which took in this very Abbey of *Villare*. Of this journey Gaufridus subsequently addressed a Report, or Journal to *Hernanus*, Bishop of Constance, which its author proffered as a *mitigated* statement of the profusion of miracles which marked the Holy Abbot's progress. He affirms that he designedly diminished the "strong meat" of his narration, not, as he says, in any distrust of the "swallow" (*credulitas*)* of the exalted personage to whom it was addressed, but that he might not excite distaste in other fastidious minds of weaker digestion:—

"Ex his quæ certissime novi, omiserim non pauca, scienter, veritus, ne forte, quamlibet curioso pareret copia tanta, fastidium. Illud sane non tam vobis loquor, *de cujus credulitate non dubito*, quam cæteris in quorum manus hæc possint devenire, nil me scripsisse nisi quod aut *vidi oculis meis*, aut fratrum nostrum qui præsentibus fuerint certissima relatione cognovi."

After thus stating that he "wittingly" reserved not a few of his wonders, the writer proceeds to pour forth a torrent of prodigies as marking the Saint's footsteps,

* The use of this word in the extract would seem to indicate that *credulity* now applied to describe a very unenviable easiness of conviction, was in early days understood as expressing the "implicit faith," which the legendist values as the first of Christian graces.

which in quantity and never-ceasing profusion, outnumber the Scriptural records of the miracles of our Blessed Lord himself—the halt, the lame, the deaf, the blind (*monocular* and *binocular*) came by batches, every day and all day, as he celebrated Mass, or went by the way, and departed cured. The veracious narrator never gives a *questionable* case, of which we must infer there were some, for he says that at High Mass celebrated on their first starting on the journey:—

“Ex his de quibus *certi* sumus, illuminati sunt cœci *quinque*—claudi *tres* recipiunt gressum;”—vespere quoque in Capella Episcopi *surdus quidam* recepit auditum.

Next day as they journeyed, it was still the same:—

“In ipso itinere, oblatis sunt surdi duo; et qui mutum fecerat loqui, surdos fecit etiam audire.”

This, intentionally or otherwise, seems to be an application to Bernard of what was originally spoken of Bernard's Lord—“He hath done all things well; he maketh both the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear.” But the course of his journey now brings him to our Monastery, shortly after its erection, where the band of monks whom he had sent, needing, probably, some miracles to animate their faith and perseverance, received them “*ex abundanti* :”—

“Novum in partibus illis ædificatum Monasterium cui VILLARE nomen est, et ante paucos menses, illico Pater Sanctus congregationem miserat monachorum, voluit ergo plantationem novellam vel in transitu visitare, et perigrinantes filios consolare. Factus est autem cum monasterium appropinquare cœperat, claudam mulierem, tetigit, signavit, erexit, et precepit liberè ambulare. Duabus quoque claudis in ipso loco, gressum, et juveni cuidam, amissum unius oculi visum, reddidit, coram fratribus ipsis, et aliis plurimis qui convenerunt.”—*S. Bernardi Op. Omnia*, v. 2, p. 2308.

These are but a few “excerpts” out of folio pages in the same strain. Well might our author write, *stanza lxxviii*.:—

—— “cibus nimius solet generare
vomitum”——

The strain upon “*credulity*,” produced by such catalogues of “lying wonders” as these, has a direct tendency to “*destroy the value of testimony altogether*.” St.

Bernard, in a short epitome* of his own rule of life, included a disclaimer of “self-complacency.” But if his disciples be-lauded him while living, as they have since done, he must have found the exercise of the grace of self-humiliation the hardest task he ever accomplished.

* *Prioris Cisterciensis ad FUNDATOREM interrogatio.*

Quæ vitæ forma, qui mores, quæ sanctæ, Pater,
Quid deceat, quid non, instrue sacrâ normâ.

BERNARDI responsio.

Quæ feci primo, vobis facienda relinquo.
Nullum turbavi—discordes pacificavi—
Læsus sustinui—nec mihi complacui.

A Cistercian Prior's Question to his Founder.

“How we may live in life and moral's well—
What's fit—what unfit—Holy Father, tell?”

St. Bernard's Reply.

As I have lived, be such your rule of life,
Disturbing none—but ever stilling strife—
Injured by foes, enduring wrong, I stood—
And sought much less mine own, than others' good.”

R.

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THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

From the beginning of time to the present day

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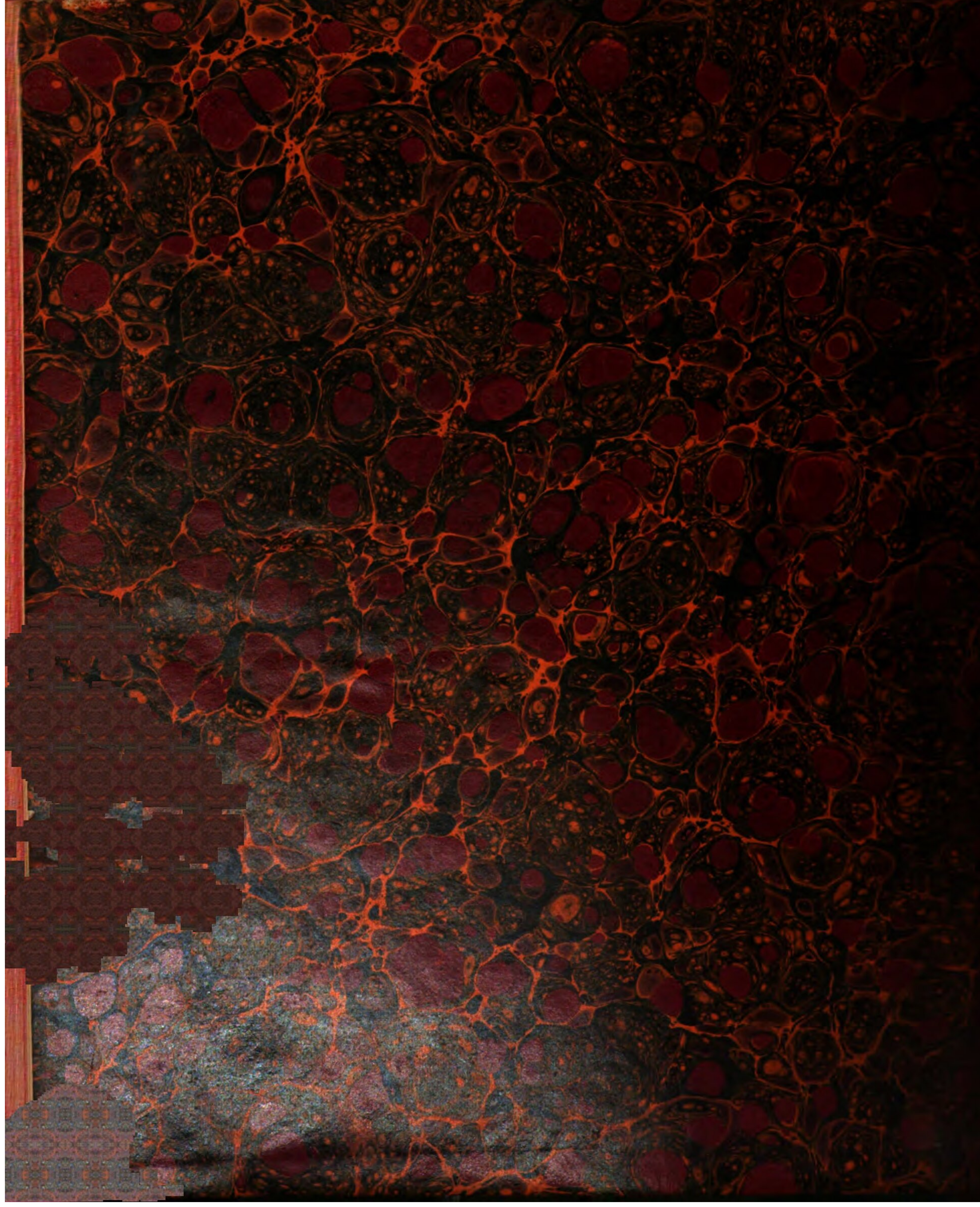
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CHAPTER III

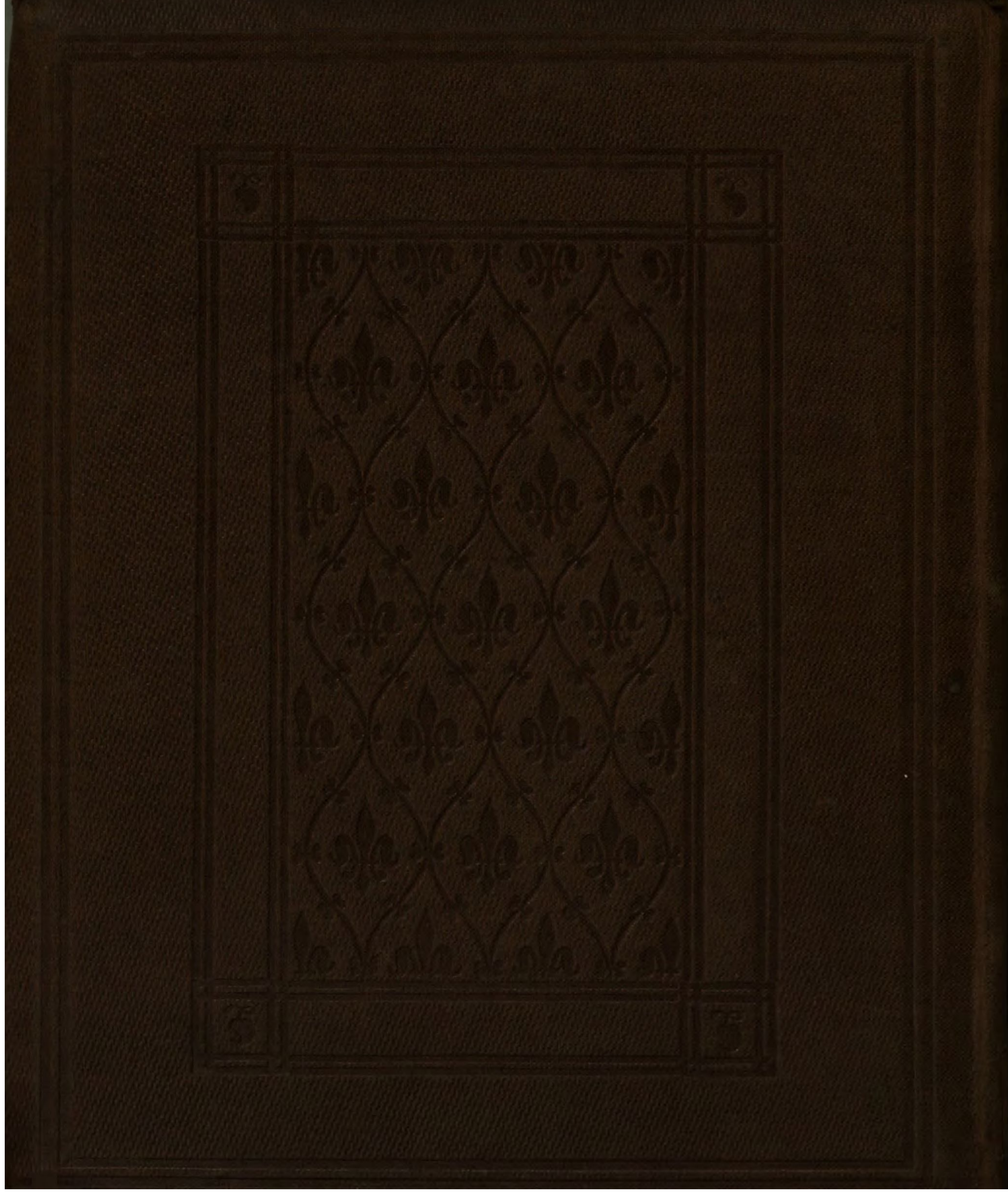
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